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THE
COTTAGE
IN THE
CHALK - PIT.

BY
ALICIA CATHERINE MANT.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following tale, written for the particular gratification of a young family, to whose pursuits the Author feels a strong friendly interest, will, it is hoped, afford a few hours' innocent amusement to many other juvenile circles, besides that to which it is now affectionately presented.

Lambeth, 27th July, 1821.



THE
COTTAGE IN THE CHALK-PIT.

CHAPTER I.

THE GARDINER FAMILY.

RESIDING in one of the largest and best-conditioned houses in Broad-street, and enjoying every comfort and advantage that opulence could afford, the young family of Mr. Gardiner passed the years of their infancy and childhood. Mr. Gardiner was a partner in one of the first mercantile houses in the city: his character for probity and honour in his commercial transactions, was not more established than were his manners for those of a gentleman in private society; and, as a domestic man, the welfare of his children was first wish of his heart. He had given

them a mother to whom he could turn, and confidently entrust the guardianship of their opening dispositions, and he felt that he was to the result.

Mr. Gardiner's family consisted of four children, two boys and two girls. At the period when our history opens, Charlotte, the eldest, had just attained her thirteenth birthday. In person she was tall and well-made, with a dark complexion and languid black eyes; her disposition was kind and affectionate; her natural readiness of acquirement quick; but sometimes, so indolent were her habits, that her talents would be entirely eclipsed from the eye of a common observer. John was the next in age, a blunt, good-humoured fellow; alive to the sort of frolic so natural to his age, and a little a friend to learning as it was possible to be. Yet, when driven to his books, he was not deficient in understanding; and although he did not promise, from his want of industry, to become a scholar, there was every reason to hope his acquirements would be such as not to disgrace the respectable British merchant for which he was destined.

In complexion he was the reverse of his eldest sister, and his golden hair curled becomingly over his head. The little fair, sylph-like Isabel, was the third of Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner's family. There was nothing sedate or sedentary in her: earnest, lively, and sanguine, her little heart seemed formed for every sensation of a pleasing nature, and life appeared to her one uninterrupted scene of enjoyment. If there was any antidote to happiness, it was in the obligation she was under to spend a certain portion of every day in study; but, once emancipated from the thralldom of learning, our little Isabel felt perfectly assured there was no other evil in store for her. Such a disposition as this has both its advantages and its disadvantages: it prevents the sufferance of many a sorrow, not existing perhaps in reality, or at least increased in anticipation, but, at the same time, it is often accompanied by a self-confidence and self-satisfaction, somewhat tending to *of feeling.*

*rd, the youngest of Mr. Gardiner's
ossessed, with a strong resemblance*

to the person of his eldest sister, her understanding and facility of acquirement without her indolence and occasional carelessness. Study was his greatest delight, and he had already made advances in his education which would occasion a momentary feeling of shame in the less assiduous John; and his childish delight fed upon the idea of becoming one of these days, a *judge* or a *bishop*. Edward, perhaps, had as few faults as most children of his age, but he was not without faults. From whence he could have acquired an unusual and pleasing qualification so unlike the rest of the family, it was difficult to ascertain; but it was, that, with many amiable points in his character, was connected a growing vanity, which tempted for such as were situated in a lower line of life than himself, or who possessed less wealth than he had penetration to cover gave his father part of his consequence in society.

The servants now and then suffered from this principle of pride, and, notwithstanding every exhibition of it was strongly

robated by his parents, the unamiable trait was still far from being eradicated.

But enough may have been said, by way of description, towards the introduction of the Gardiner family to my young readers; their characters will be, perhaps, better developed by a relation of facts, and we will therefore take up the thread of their history in the apartment appropriated to the prosecution of their studies, and at the hour appointed for relaxation between the departure of one master and the arrival of another.

Mr. Fortescue, the master of writing and arithmetic, had no sooner closed the door on Mrs. Gardiner, whom he followed out of the study, than the playful Isabel, rejoiced at the liberty his absence occasioned, hastily arose from her desk, and, flinging her slate on one side, and her copy-book on another, skipped about the room, in joy at the idea of being released for one hour from the shackles of learning.

Who is for a game of ball in the tennis-
said she, giving, as she spoke a kick

to a dictionary which had just fallen from lap of her sister: "come, Charlotte, put away those tiresome exercises."

"No," replied Charlotte, "I have no time, and do, dear Isabel, fetch me back the book, for I have just met with such a puzzling sentence; and you know that Signor Bonas was much dissatisfied with me at our last lesson."

As she spoke, Charlotte was indolently lounging over her Tasso: it was a warm day, her health was not particularly strong, and rather than exert herself to fetch the dictionary, she would have carelessly passed over the sentence before her.

"Promise to have a game of ball, and I will bring you back your dictionary," said Isabel, putting her coaxing arms round her sister, and pointing, with a provoking smile to the book: "come, come! there lies what you want; one word will obtain it: one line, word, Yes: that is all. Come, promise."

"Should I promise if I do not mean to perform?" said Charlotte, raising her languid

black eyes, with great softness, to her sister's countenance.

"No, no," hastily replied Isabel; "to be sure not: but if you promise I am sure of you, for I never knew you break your word in my life."

"No, it will not do, dear Isabel," replied her sister, smiling at this little artful compliment; "if you do not fetch the dictionary, I must continue without it;" and she was proceeding to pass over the difficult line, when John good-naturedly flew to the dictionary, and was bearing it to his sister; but Isabel, having no intention of really vexing her, took possession of it before him, and restored it, with a kiss, to the owner.

"You are a dear little plodding soul," said Isabel, as she kissed her sister's cheek; "but, for my part, I should be quite fagged to sit at it; as you do, from morning to night."

"Well now *I* will play with you," said Edward, closing his book, out of which he had not looked since the disappearance of Mr. Fortescue: "come, Jack, are you for a *war* too?" added he, as he took his bro-

ther's arm. John, who had been amusing himself with any thing but his book, was startled, and coloured at this application.

"Yes—no—yes: I do not think—I believe I have prepared nothing," stammered out John.

"Well, do sit down then, and make haste," replied Edward: "Let me see, where are you? can I help you?"

"Oh! you may do it all if you like," said John; and, throwing his books to his brother, he was hastening with Isabel from the apartment. Suddenly recollecting himself, however, he hung back, and withdrew his arm from his sister. "No, I cannot: it would not be honest." And with this consciousness was mingled a feeling of shame at the superior application of a younger brother.

"Well then, I shall get nobody at last," said Isabel, carelessly taking up her own exercise book, and as carelessly turning over the leaves.

"*And are you yourself prepared for Signor Bondi?*" inquired Edward; who, although

assistance had been honourably declined his brother, continued close to him, in order to spur on his exertions.

"Oh! it will not take me a minute to prepare," said Isabel: "I can always learn all my lessons while Charlotte is hammering out one of hers: besides, you know, I shall not much care if I do get a little grumbling; we have a pleasure in store for this evening, that would soon clear off Signor Bondi's tears, if it should happen to draw any." And, with a smile of vanity, her eye was attracted to the mirror, which reflected her sweet little figure.

"But you would be very sorry to lose this pleasure, I am sure," said Edward.

"Well, I know I should, Mr. Prig," pertly retorted Isabel, without taking her eyes from the glass; "and so would you too, if you were such a favourite of Mrs. Montefort's as I am."

"I was not finding fault, I am sure, at your pleasing pleasure in going to Mr. Montefort's; only wanted to save you from a chance of losing the pleasure, by taking care not to get

into disgrace before the evening comes. I am sure we all love Mrs. Montefort equal with yourself; and if she does show any partiality to you, it is more, I believe, owing to your likeness to mamma, than to any thing else. You know every body says how like you are to mamma; and Mrs. Montefort is so partial to her, that it is no wonder she should like you on account of this resemblance."

"What a proser you are, Edward," said Isabel; "if you once begin to make use of your tongue, there is no end of it. But here comes James with the dinner-tray: come, give me my books, and I will just look over my lessons."

While she was speaking, a footman passed through the apartment where they were sitting, to the children's dining-room, which was divided from it by large folding doors. As he moved rapidly along, he dropped a table-napkin from under his arm, and the good-humoured John started from his chair and assisted to place it on the table. On re-

turning to his sisters and brother, Edward observed:

"I think you might choose a rather more gentlemanly employment, than you sometimes do, John. You are uncommonly fond of helping the servants: it is a great pity you cannot meet with a foot-boy's place yourself."

I do not know that I am particularly fond of it," replied John, colouring, with some feeling of anger, at this remark; "but James's hands seemed so full, that he could not pick up what had fallen from his arm; and it would have been ill-natured not to have assisted him."

The boys felt inclined to be angry with each other, but at the same moment they both of them turned their eyes towards their sister Isabel, and a new subject of animadversion presented itself. The little girl, it is true, had taken up her lessons, but not to look at them; for, to say the truth, her head ran so *entirely* upon a very pretty new frock, which Montefort had worked for her, and in *she* expected to look more than ever

like her mamma, that she could fix her attention on nothing else, for many nights together; and, as her little eyes perpetually wandered to the mirror, she was endeavoring to twist the sleeve she now wore into the form of that one which ornamented her new frock.

"You will be a most bewitching lady, I dare say," said John, satirically.

"That is not like mamma, however," answered Edward: "I have heard most people observe that she is pretty; but no one can think can accuse her of vanity."

Isabel blushed, and looked down at her books; and James at the same time announcing that dinner was ready, the young people repaired to their dining-room.

CHAP. II.

A SCENE OF DISTRESS.

It was subject of surprise to our group, that they were not visited, a

their mother, during their meal. It was prevailing custom to take a luncheon with them, when they dined, and her absence was a general disappointment. To inquiries of each, to the servant who waited on them, they were only answered, that his mistress was in the library, with her father, and had given orders that the dinner should be served up without her; and, as the children were occasionally accustomed, when their mother was otherwise occupied, to take their meal by themselves, they were too discreet to press any further inquiries on the servant, or to make any remarks, as to the probable occasion of their mother's absence. When their dessert was brought, and the footman had retired, they pursued their conjectures aloud; though the circumstance was not of such very unusual occurrence as to occasion them any uneasiness. However, they looked eagerly towards the door, hoping every moment that it opened by their mother. And this length happened. But what was the state of every youthful bosom, when, in-

stead of the cheerful smile, which generally irradiated the countenance of their benevolent parent, and the lively manner with which she generally met them, her agitated appearance immediately bespoke distress: the tears which had visibly been withheld, to prepare for this interview with her children, refused every control, and met the eager gaze of each.

Mrs. Gardiner, for a few moments embarrassed by maternal solicitude, sunk in the first chair which presented itself to her children, terrified and agitated, and towards her, and folded their arms about her.

A few moments passed in a silence which Mrs. Gardiner in vain attempted to break. At length, relieved by the tears which wetted the bosoms of her children, she calmly recalled her resolution; and looking at them with more serenity, thus tremulously addressed them:

“I appear to set you, my dear children, but a poor example of the resignation which I wish to teach you, to the dispensations of

dence; but after these first emotions are subsided, you will, I trust, see me more as I ought, and more as I wish to be."

Again Mrs. Gardiner was obliged to stop; and the children, losing all their curiosity to learn its occasion, in their concern for the agitation of their mother, endeavoured each to obtain a hand to press and imprint with their kisses.

"I have always endeavoured to teach you, my dear children," recommenced Mrs. Gardiner, with more composure, "that splendid and luxurious as is the style in which a British merchant lives, and large as apparently may be his fortune, his sources of wealth must always be uncertain, and his schemes of success extremely doubtful. I have endeavoured to inculcate this on you all," continued Mrs. Gardiner; "but I know not how far the manner in which you have hitherto lived, may have induced you to look upon it as an idle tale, or as really a thing ~~very~~ much within a possibility of happen-

rs. Gardiner here spoke with a smile;

but at the same time, the tear she fruitlessly endeavoured to repress, fell upon her hand but was immediately wiped off by the lips of her children.

“On the credence you have given to the lessons I have constantly taught you, on the uncertainty of riches, will depend, perhaps, a part of your happiness, on what I am going to impart to you. For it were useless, even if it were possible, to withhold from you, that your father, who yesterday morning considered himself worth one hundred thousand pounds, is at this moment completely destitute of every thing. It is unnecessary to say to you, my dear children, that this misfortune is owing to no fault of your father's; your affection will have dictated a truth to which every fair-dealing person will agree; and all that remains, both for yourselves and for me, is to use every exertion in our power, to lessen the blow on you dear father, who feels it most severely, on our account. We must endeavour to think lightly of it, and consider how much greater *would have been* our distress, at the loss

ny one of our beloved circle, than at this more worldly misfortune. Doubtless the means of subsistence will be pointed out to us; and if we are happy and united in our family circle, we possess a blessing which all the wealth we have lost could never have purchased for us."

Mrs. Gardiner here finished speaking; and the children, pressing near her, with affectionate eagerness, promised to bear as they ought, the misfortunes with which they were visited. She returned their endearing tenderness; and then, begging them to compose themselves amongst each other, before they saw their father, again returned to the library, to administer consolation to her agitated husband.

When the children were thus left to themselves, they had time to consider the altered situation in which they found themselves suddenly placed; but it would be difficult to determine the precise state of their feelings on the occasion. While their mother *re-acted with them*, concern for her appeared *liveliest sensation*; but, as she left

them, it was natural that their young should form ideas rather more and an apprehension of inconvenience ever indefinitely formed, for some kept them all in silence. They had so accustomed to be waited upon, & their state of affluence, so unavailing to the anticipation of their wishes, were at a loss to imagine what were the duties attendant on their changed circumstances: the sanguineness of youth prevented their seeing its extent; but it was easy for each to discover that prudence would be sensibly felt.

Before the young people had had time sufficiently to settle their ideas, an discussion amongst themselves the interest they had just received from their Signor Bondi entered the apartment may be imagined that his pupils particularly perfect in their separate studies and had they been ever so well provided in the absence of their dear mother, who was accustomed seat at their table, would have prevented their acquitting themselves

any satisfaction. It was easy to perceive, from the grave countenances which met their instructor, that some family distress had occurred: he good-naturedly, therefore, passed over the imperfect lessons; and paying a short visit, left them, without asking any questions.

As soon as Mr. Gardiner had imparted to his wife the change in their prospects, which a very few hours had produced, a general order had been given to the servants, to deny admittance to visitors of every description; and, amongst the rest, on the arrival of Mrs. Montefort's carriage, the prescribed answer of, "Not at home," was returned from one footman to the other. At the very moment of the answer being given, James, the servant who waited on the young people at dinner, passed through the hall, and hearing Mrs. Montefort's name, and the *not at home* which was given to her servant, he hastened forwards to the carriage. Mrs. Montefort had already alighted; for rumour had conveyed to her the sound of difficulty, *thout indeed describing particulars; and a*

feeling, not of curiosity, but of friendship determined her to take no denial.

"I am glad you are come, Madam," said James, as he respectfully led the way to the library: "there is a great deal of trouble I believe," added he, as a tear started in his eye; "and, whatever it is, you will do both my master and mistress good."

Mrs. Montefort made no reply to the faithful servant, who at this moment opened the door of the library; but desiring him not to follow her further, he retired, and she proceeded alone to the private library of Mr. Gardiner. Her gentle tap at the door was answered by the appearance of Mrs. Gardiner, who offered her hand, with a smile melancholy but affectionate serenity.

"I concluded you did not mean to come, and I have not denied to me," said Mrs. Montefort, endeavouring to speak cheerfully, "so I have thrust myself into your private retreat."

"I am not sure that I did not include even you in the general order," replied Mr. Gardiner; "but I cannot feel otherwise."

han pleased that you have chosen to infringe upon it."

"I know not any one else who would have infringed upon it with impunity," said Mr. Gardiner, endeavouring to smile; "and I know not any one whom I could have borne to witness the first feelings of disappointment of a ruined man."

As Mr. Gardiner thus spoke, he wrung the hand of Mrs. Montefort, who, alarmed at the extent to which his misfortunes pointed, was at a loss, for some moments, in what words to offer consolation or advice. The self-possession, however, and fortitude of Mrs. Gardiner, very soon prevailed over the momentary agitation occasioned by the entrance of her friend; and she quietly entered into a relation of facts, which put Mrs. Montefort into the possession of the extent to which the losses of her friends reached.

The failure was unlimited and complete, ~~if~~ such as was represented by the foreign ~~it~~; but a doubt had arisen, whether the ~~it~~ *himself* was a man implicitly to be

trusted; and a faint hope existed, that the presence of a principal abroad, where transactions connected with the English business were carrying on, might in some degree change the face of affairs: at least, it was worth the trial; the whole house concurred in thinking it a plan to be adopted; and on its execution, they unanimously fixed on Mr. Gardiner, as proper to carry it into effect. The answer he should return to his existing partners, on the occasion, had been the subject of discussion, at the time when Montefort had broken in upon their conference.

To Mrs. Montefort the subject was immediately imparted; and with little hesitation, she concurred with her friends in thinking, that the absence of Mr. Gardiner from his family, for a few months, was a sacrifice it would be highly advisable to make.

"And during the time," said she, *having given her opinion, "let Mrs. Gardiner and the children all go into the*

th me: you know I always like retire-
 when my husband is absent. Fleet-
 is now preparing for my reception: the
 is large enough for half a dozen such
 as as yours and mine. You," con-
 l she, turning towards Mr. Gardiner,
 leave England to-morrow with greater
 action, having first seen your wife and
 en where every affectionate attention
 be exerted to lessen the pain of your
 ce; and Isabel, I think, will have less
 dty in reconciling herself to the sepa-
 when she sees you at rest on her ac-
 ."

. Gardiner was delighted with this
 sal, and instantly declared he had no
 r any hesitation in acceding to the
 a of his partners. Mrs. Gardiner was
 applied to, but her acquiescence was
 readily obtained.

seeing her hesitate, Mrs. Montefort
 ionately said, "You cannot have a
 of the pleasure this arrangement
 give me, my dear friend."

"replied Mrs. Gardiner, taking the

hand of her friend, and pressing it with
derness: "I feel and acknowledge all
kindness, both to me and my children
as we always speak sincerely to each
I shall not scruple to say to you, that
ever your affection might induce such a
posal, my prudence cannot accede to it.
a moment consider, and you will I am
agree with me in acknowledging, the
style of life in which you live, it cannot
this time be prudent or justifiable for
children to move in. The delicacies
luxuries of life are now no longer theirs
it would be barbarous not immediate
endeavour removing their taste for
The will of their grandfather fortune
secures us a subsistence; but the most
economy will be necessary, and they
learn to accommodate themselves to cir-
stances."

"Your reasonings are generally unan-
able," said Mrs. Montefort; "and
regret the loss of the gratification
promised myself, I can hardly help
ing to the propriety of your determi-

I certainly should do so, if there appeared a positive certainty that things are exactly as they are represented to us; but while there remains a probability of their wearing a more favourable aspect, why not employ a little procrastination in meeting difficulties?"

"And why employ any," my dearest friend," said Mrs. Gardiner, "when the probability is such as it is? In my opinion, there is a want of proper courage, in shrinking from an evil which must eventually happen to us; and when we see it impending, it is far better to meet it, and resist it openly, than to have it constantly before us in apprehension, and be at length driven to sustain it."

"And after having made all these projected sacrifices," observed Mrs. Montefort, "and putting every body in possession of the fact of your difficulties; if, after all this, it should appear that there can have been no necessity——"

"At least there can be no dishonour—no reflection fall on us, for returning to the

same sphere we now feel compelled to relinquish," replied Mrs. Gardiner: "those who think there is, need not receive us: their acquaintance will not be worth regret; those we love, I am convinced will not value us the less, for a course which we shall have thought it due to our own respectability, and our children's benefit, to pursue."

Saying this, Mrs. Gardiner offered her hand affectionately to Mrs. Montefort, who took it with warmth, and replied:

"You are right, my dear Isabel, and my own feelings must yield to your better judgment."

"Yes, you are right, you are always right, my dearest Isabel," said Mr. Gardiner, tenderly embracing his wife; "and we must relinquish the kindness of Mrs. Montefort, though we shall never cease to remember it."

Mrs. Montefort remained for a few minutes silent. Her interest in her friends was secondary to none but her attachment to her husband, and she was sedulous to think of *some plan that might in any degree amelior-*

their present prospects. At length one curred, and she immediately imparted it.

It was this. About a mile and a half from Fleetwood, the elegant country residence of Mrs. Montefort, there was a beautiful little cottage, situated in a chalk-pit, which, it now struck her, was to be let; and which, if sufficiently large, she considered might be eligible for the temporary residence of her friends; and to this she advised their retiring. To this plan Mrs. Gardiner could make no objection; for although she had prudentially declined accepting Mrs. Montefort's invitation to Fleetwood, she felt of how much comfort, both to herself and her children, would a vicinity to her prove. Mr. Gardiner himself was much pleased with the proposition; and Mrs. Montefort undertook to write into Surrey, and make inquiries about the cottage, that very evening. The plan being thus far settled, Mrs. Montefort very soon left the house; and Mr. Gardiner repaired to his counting-house, to impart to his partners his determination to take the proposed voyage.

CHAPTER III.

PREPARATIONS FOR A REMOVAL.

THE light spirits of youth are, happily, slow in reconciling them to changes which first appear disagreeable to bear; and, in very few days, the young Gardiner's had learned to look forward, with something bordering on a pleasing feeling of novelty to their change of situation. The necessary absence of their father seemed, both to them and to their mother, the greatest deprivation they were to sustain; but as this was only to be a temporary one, his return would be something of a pleasing nature to look forward to; and, in the interval, the children, in whom the best affections of their hearts were excited by existing circumstances, were all forming schemes to be useful to their mother, and attentive to all her wishes and comforts. Her example, in the fortitude and *cheerful resignation* with which she met

lies, was a stimulus to them all; and
ied with each other in showing how lit-
y dreaded the personal inconveniences
ere preparing to experience.

ere was very little delay between deter-
on and action: the chances of Mr.
ner's success in going abroad, seemed,
reat measure, to depend on the prompt-
of his exertions; and but a few days re-
d to arrange plans for the establish-
of his family during his absence. The
ge near Fleetwood was most fortunately
t, and at this retreat he determined to
them, under the blessing of Pro-
ce, and with a distant hope of removing
again from thence, in the course of a
onths.

om the first information of his losses,
Gardiner had given general notice to his
establishment in town, that they must
ak a new service; for, with the exception
e female servant, who had lived with
Gardiner ever since her marriage, he
no intention of retaining any. All were
to receive their dismissal, for in no

situation could they have felt servitude than in the family of Mr. Gardiner. But he felt it more than James, the young man was before mentioned as having expressed his pleasure in the arrival of Mrs. Montague. Although still young, he had lived nearly sixteen years with his master, and Mr. Gardiner regretted particularly giving him dismissal. He called him into his private library, and expressing to him how much he felt at being obliged to recommend him to another service, told him that Mrs. Montague was willing to give him the situation of butler in her family; and although on much greater trust than that he had held his, he had no doubt of his acquitting himself with the same satisfaction he had always done in his present service.

James made no reply, and both Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner felt a little surprised that he expressed no obligation for the advantageous situation, which nothing but a very strong recommendation could have obtained for a young man. James, indeed, did at

hiding his face in both his hands, he burst into a flood of tears, and leaning against a book-shelf near him, he absolutely sobbed like a child.

At this moment John Gardiner entered the room, and James, totally forgetful of the distance between himself and his young master, caught the little fellow to his bosom; and the sympathy which is ever ready to express itself in the eyes of children, exhibited itself in those of John, as he clasped his arms round the laced collar of the footman.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said James, at length recollecting himself, but speaking scarcely articulately; "I beg your pardon, but I thought you never would turn *me* away: I have been thinking it over and over again, and I did think you never would have sent me away."

Again James hid his face in his hands. Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner were both affected, and John, still retaining the hand of the servant, and endeavouring to draw him to his *ther*, said: "You will keep James, papa

will you not?" asked the child, earnestly looking in his father's face.

"I am sorry, very sorry, to part with James, my love," replied Mr. Gardiner, with emotion; "but you know I cannot afford to keep him."

"Why, I am sure I should not be much expence to you, Sir," said James, speaking a little more calmly: "all the servants in the kitchen say I am a little eater; and there would be no occasion for all this fine work upon my clothes," added he, drawing his hand over his laced shoulder-cap: "I am but small, and a suit of your half worn-out would last me a year; for I never tear my clothes as some do: and I could have a fustian jacket out of my own pocket for working in; and I dare say there is a bit of a garden to be looked after, and may be a pig to eat the spare vegetables: and as to the tax——

"No more, no more," hastily interrupted Mr. Gardiner; "you shall stay, my good fellow, and take care of your mistress and children: any tax would be worth paying such attachment."

James seized his master's hand, which was extended to him, and pressed it to his lips with fervour.

"Go, go," said Mr. Gardiner, scarcely able to restrain his emotion.

John took the hand of the happy James, and leaving him as he passed the servant's hall, hastened up stairs, to report to his sisters and brother that James was to stay with them, and there was a beautiful little garden at the cottage, and they were to keep pigs, and he should help James to feed them; and he dared say they should keep hens and ducks, and all sorts of things too.

"Do you know when we are to go, John?" said all the young party at the same time.

"No: do you?" replied John, with an inquiring look.

"I quite long for the time," said Isabel; "for I think it will be so delightful to have the nice rambles Mrs. Montefort was telling us of. And I am glad we are going to be so near Mrs. Montefort."

Isabel was employed in packing up a little of trinkets which had been given th

as keepsakes, but which their mother had hinted to them it would not be fit for them to wear at present. The occupation occasioned, now and then, a sigh in poor Isabel, as she could not resist her frequent impulses to try each little piece of finery on before she placed it in the little mahogany case, from which it was not again to be removed.

"I wonder if I am ever to wear the frock I was to have worn that evening at Mr Montefort's," said Isabel, alluding to the day on which their father's losses had been imparted to them, and at the same time twisting round her delicate neck a turquoise necklace, which was to have been worn at the same time.

"You cannot help hankering after a little finery, can you?" said John, good-humouredly, "but you would find a frock of that sort, think, very much in the way; for they say that we shall have to pass a thicket of furz bushes every time we go in and out of the chalk-pit."

"Besides," said Charlotte, raising her eye from her book, "I am sure, dear Isabel,

“I do not wish to wear it; for you are always pleased at being reckoned like mamma, and you cannot but have noticed the change she has already made in her dress. She looks elegant and neat as ever, but I have not seen one of her beautiful laced gowns since this day week: her frills are all muslin too now.”

“Well, now you mention it, I recollect that they are so,” observed Edward, whose attention also was roused by this conversation on their mother: “and when she changes her dress before dinner, she does not put on the ornaments she used to do.”

“No, she only wears the brooch with papa’s hair, and the bracelets with ours,” said John: “and one evening, like a little thoughtless blockhead, I asked her why she did not wear her jewels; and I saw a tear in her eye as she asked me, in return, if I remembered the story of the Campanian lady.”

“She meant that we were her jewels,” said Ed. “I suppose. Well, I think it will be some time before I shall be as satisfied as she is to dress without ornament.”

"At all events, do not let mamma see that it is any mortification to you to be dressed plain frocks, dear Isabel," said Charlotte "for you see plainly that all her regrets are for papa and for us, and not for herself; therefore, if you evince disappointment, you will make her feel it too."

"Then we are always to wear plain frocks," inquired Isabel, once more adorning her neck with a little pearl negligée, before she finally deposited it in her box.

"I think so," replied Charlotte; "for when Newman was packing in mamma's dressing room, this morning, I saw her folding up that frock Mrs. Montefort gave you; and *mami* said: 'You had better take the lace off from that frock, Newman, and fold it nicely, Miss Isabel is not likely to want it at present'."

It cannot be denied that poor Isabel was mortified at this annihilation of her little hopes of vanity: she will, however, be excused, it is to be hoped, from any want of affection for her mother on the occasion. *She was devotedly attached to her, as all the rest of her children; but this*

she possessed in a greater share than children of her age, would occasionallyminate over every other consideration, the very few sad moments she experienced, mostly took their rise from its influence.

But we will hope better things from a change now necessarily given to her views.

The conversation of the children was interrupted by the appearance of Mrs. Montefort, who occasioned a general sensation of surprise, and who suspended every occupation that had been going forward. Her friends all crowded round her, and she presently was seated in the midst of

1. Montefort had never yet been a mother, and although she was now looking forward with pleasing solicitude, to the period when she should open a novel scene of duty before her, she at present felt an almost maternal interest in the children of her friend. These peculiar circumstances, of which the reader may not be particularly interesting.

our young readers, had led to her friendship with Mrs. Gardiner. A similarity of tastes and pursuits, and a perfect agreement on most important points, had made them mutually attractive to each other; and notwithstanding the long separations which the different relations of life exacted, their hearts were always united by the same friendly feelings of kindness and affection. During the last season, they had been more together than had been the case for some years. The children had been indulged by frequently visiting Mrs. Montefort in her residence; and seeing her almost daily at home, and naturally inclined to value those whom they saw esteemed by their parents, they had grown so attached to Mrs. Montefort that they none of them knew a greater pleasure than being in her society.

Mrs. Montefort's present visit to the children, was to give them all the information they were so anxious to receive in regard to their new residence in Surrey; but not to participate in relation, we must reserve the account she gave them, to the chapter

shall introduce both them and our young readers to the cottage itself.

CHAPTER IV.

THE COTTAGE.

A VERY short time elapsed between the determination of Mr. Gardiner to go abroad, and his actual departure from England. We will not attempt to describe the feelings of the whole party, at a separation which made so great a void in domestic comfort; it will be sufficient to observe, that they were under proper regulation, and that the young people followed the example of their parents, in endeavouring to reconcile each other to a measure which was urged by prudential motives, and destined for the future benefit of the family.

In a few days after the departure of Mr. Gardiner, his wife and family retired to their

new residence in the country; and, from the moment of their leaving Broad-street, a new scene was to open before the children. Down to this time they had experienced very sensible alteration in their circumstances. For some days past the servants had gradually lessened in the servant's hall, but still enough had remained to supply every convenience to the family. All were anxious to remain as long as possible, in service where they had been so well treated, and a permission to leave the house had been signified more than once to most of them, before they could make up their minds to retire. At length, however, all were gone but Newman, of the female servants, and one but James was left of the men. He had changed his laced livery for a plain frock coat; and it was the arrival of the stage, and not the elegant chariot of his mistress, that he opened the drawing-room door to announce. His attentive care had already placed the luggage in its place, and in a few minutes our young friends turned their

om their birth. If a tear stole silently down the cheek of Mrs. Gardiner, she may be excused an emotion which no personal inconvenience could have excited, but which was natural under the disappointment of any a maternal expectation.

The children for some time remained silent, and they seemed scarcely to know whether to laugh or to cry at the novelty of the vehicle which they now found themselves enclosed. They looked at each other, and then at their mother; and Isabel was on the point of making some ludicrous remark, but Charlotte, perceiving that her mother did not appear comfortable, checked her, fearing that she was going to make some observation that might increase her uneasiness. She drew her attention to a sweep of underwood that lay in a valley through which they were passing, and asked her if it was not beautiful.

"Where, where?" said Isabel, starting hastily: "I cannot see any thing out of this little high window;" and reaching across her sister, a sudden jolt of the coach sent her into her mother's lap.

John and Edward both burst into a laugh for which they were reproved by their mother; but Isabel good-humouredly excused them, and, as she leaned over to kiss the Charlotte whispered to her to sit still, or it would inconvenience mamma.

Isabel took her sister's hint, and they travelled on for some time more quietly, when poor John, overcome by the closeness of the coach, turned suddenly pale, and appeared likely to faint.

"Shall I change sides with Master Gardiner, Ma'am?" said Newman; "perhaps cannot ride with his back to the horses."

The offered change was made, but John remained so excessively ill, that Mr Gardiner proposed his trying the outside and the next time the coach stopped, he was given over to James's care.

"That is Fleetwood, Madam," said James as he took his young master from the coach "as far as you can see on your right, up *the hill*, among the trees; and the cottage *only a mile further on the left*."

"Very well, James," said his mistress.

"remember that the coachman does not pass the spot where he is to put us down: and pray take care of Master Gardiner."

James touched his hat, the coachman again drove on, and in another half hour drew up at the end of a lane, where stood a servant in Mrs. Montefort's livery, prepared to lead the way to the cottage, and a little donkey-cart for the conveyance of the luggage.

"My mistress is at the cottage, Ma'am," said the servant, as he assisted Mrs. Gardiner to alight; "and says, if either of the young ladies or gentlemen would like to ride, there will be plenty of room in the cart."

"~~●~~ had rather walk;" and "I had rather walk," was echoed and re-echoed through the party; and the children, in their anxiety to be useful, each taking charge of a parcel, they proceeded cheerfully onwards.

It was a beautiful winding lane that formed the approach to their new residence. On either side the woodbine and eglantine ~~layed~~ *layed* fancifully amongst every varied tint of ~~ing~~ *ing* green, of which the hedges were ~~posed~~ *posed*; the wild creepers had been left

twine in careless luxuriance between maple and the guelder rose; and the sloping banks were spotted with tufts of yellow, red, and white, from the tender blossoms of larkspur, larkaria, veronica, and ranunculus. The air was scented with fresh and sweet perfume, and, while Isabel and the boys skipped backwards and forwards, they filled their hands with a beautiful bouquet, which the next moment was thrown away, to admit candidly from a more brilliant group. The party were, at the invitation of their mother, resigned to the donkey-cart, and they were then enabled to enjoy the unconstrained liberty to which they were invited by the lights around them. Charlotte remained close to her mother. She would also have enjoyed a run, but she restrained her inclination. Her mother was not backward in covering the delicate attention which ensured her a companion; and the affectionate sympathy with which she received her arm, when she declined accompanying her sister and brothers, was precious to her sensitive feelings. At every few yards the scene changed.

n about a quarter of an hour, John, of
n the rest of the party frequently lost
, re-appeared, completely out of breath,
saying that he had seen the beautiful
cottage. In a few minutes the party
he close hedges of the lane, and a most
y prospect suddenly presented itself be-
them. They had been for some time
ly ascending, and on looking back when
left the lane, they perceived that they
been walking through the skirts of a
ice, which hung gently sloping over the
l of an amphitheatre of down, upon
h they were now standing. The dell
formed, sweeping round from the cop-
was browsed by flocks of sheep; and
er on to the right, half embosomed in
, appeared a village spire, and the
neys of a few cottages, from which the
smoke was curling through the evening
Carrying itself round to the right, the
rested on a distant view of hills, whose
outline distinctly cut the mellow tints of
postern sky; and obliquely from this, at
the middle distance, rose the tall elms,

which were all that from this spot could be discerned of Fleetwood. Again to the right a winding road could at intervals be discerned, hiding itself completely as it approached nearer, and almost leaving a doubt whether it had not entirely disappeared, and cut off every communication from that side of the country. It continued, however, though unseen, to the edge of the chalk-pit; and thence a step-ladder, artfully formed in one of the rugged banks, conducted by a shorter way than the direct path, to the farm-house at the bottom. The farm-house itself was most hidden by the shrubberies which had been tastefully planted as ornamental appendages to the little cottage beyond, to which we will now conduct our young readers.

It was really a cottage, and not one of those habitations to which fashion has appropriated that appellation. It simply consisted of two little parlours, and behind them kitchen and scullery. Over the whole were four small bed-rooms; the roof was thatched, the windows were latticed, and the small porch which formed the entrance, was of

hung with ivy and creeping shrubs. Behind were two or three small buildings, which might, at the will of the occupier, be converted into milk-house, hen-house, or otherwise appropriated. There was a small yard for poultry, and a convenient though not very extensive garden. Garden, however, was not required, excepting for the production of vegetables, and a small space is sufficient for this. The whole chalk-pit was a garden; the whole country around was a garden; and nature had been so bountiful, and art had been to nature so judicious and tasty an auxiliary, that a sweeter succession of beauties were constantly presenting themselves, than the hand of the most skilful gardener would be likely to produce.

The young party were absolutely in raptures, as they entered the little sylvan recess in which the cottage immediately stood. 'How beautiful! how delightful! how charming!' was uttered by all, and Charlotte could no longer restrain her wish to join her sisters. Pleased at the enjoyment of children, Mrs. Gardiner herself forgot

THE COTTAGE.

at the occasion which led them to this
at.

What could there be in London to re-
" observed one. "How much prefer-
Broad-street is this sweet little bower,
mother, at the same time sitting down
moment in the porch of honeysuckles;
all was joy, and all was delight, till a re-
proach arose that their father was not
ing it with them. Here was a source
gret, but the loss of wealth at this mo-
was none. Mrs. Gardiner, affection-
pressing each child to her bosom,
also herself, that were her husband here,
should have no alloy in the simple enjoy-
of her children; and the whole party
ed their new residence in perfect com-
ent with their present prospects, and
a fervent prayer for the quick return of
without whom they could not experience
et happiness. In the little parlour on
right-hand side of the entrance, Mrs.
effort awaited them.

should not have seen you this even-

her friend, "had I not a little piece of information for you, which I think will give you pleasure, and which I did not choose to give to any one else to communicate. I have this morning received a hasty line from my husband, who has been detained by contrary winds in the Downs; and who has, by this means, had an opportunity of taking Mr. Gardiner on board his own ship. The arrangement I think will be mutually pleasant, and satisfy you that Mr. Gardiner will be assured all those little comforts on board, which fresh-water sailors so much require."

It is needless to say that this information was gratefully acceptable to Mrs. Gardiner: it contributed much to the general cheerfulness of the tea-table; and Mrs. Montefort, ever a welcome guest, on this evening received double caresses from all the young people. It has not been yet observed that the husband of Mrs. Montefort was the captain of an East Indiaman; who, though still a young man, had already made very large additions, in several successive voyages, to the handsome capital with which he had

embarked in commerce. His voyage generally been made with that zealoulingness so necessary to successful trade, and the months he had spent on shore most frequently appeared to him tedious and uninteresting; but the last, which he made subsequently to his marriage, twelve months' absence from his home worn tediously away; and his present prospects of joining the feelings of a father to those of a husband, had determined that the voyage he was now undertaking unless overruled by forward circumstances should be the last he would take. He longed to become a settled, domestic man; the fortune he had already realized was sufficient to ensure independence, even for a large family, if he should chance to have one; and he was not sufficiently mercenary to have a wish to scrape together for an unnecessary profusion.

The evening passed off pleasantly at the cottage, and the young family slept sweetly beneath their comparatively humble roof.

CHAPTER V.

THE FARM-HOUSE.

harms of novelty are great; the attachment of the young Gardiners to their very strong; but notwithstanding two incitements to become reconciled to the difference of situation, there were things in which they could not feel less than awkward. The exertions of so attached and faithful servants were watchful to prevent their feeling the more numerous attendants; yet there was much necessarily to be done, that it was possible they could receive one quarter the assistance to which they had been accustomed. The garden, though not large, was more than half the time of James, kept it tolerably neat; and this, besides a number of other little out-of-doors occupations, prevented his having much leisure to spend in the house; and it may be easily

imagined that Newman had very little to give to attendance to the young ladies to her needle: consequently, it was necessary that the young ladies should learn to upon themselves; and more than this, it was necessary they should learn to make themselves useful in domestic affairs. The late Mr. Gardiner had made a complete change in the prospects of every individual in his family; and instead of its being a consideration to educate his children in such manner, that they might not unprofitably employ the ample leisure offered them by independence, it was now a question, what would be the best to adopt, in order that they might secure themselves independent through the medium of their own exertions. Their education had hitherto been conducted on a most enlarged scale, and no expense had been spared to give them every advantage likely to ensure its advancement. Their expences could now be no longer incurred, and it was a point to be determined, whether, in stopping expence, it were also necessary to stop improvement. In the course

For the boys were likely to gain their good, would it be proper their minds should receive that polish, and their understandings that cultivation, the plan already settled would naturally lead to? and for girls, would it be better to restrict their attainments within such limits as should be consistent with the necessary employments of a housewife? or should they be allowed to continue those pursuits so generally admitted in the present liberal plan of education?

Mrs. Gardiner reflected upon the various arguments to be offered on both sides of the question; but she was not long in determining to secure to her children, as far as her own ability of instruction would allow by the means, those attainments which might ever prove a source of gratification to themselves, and would, in all probability, be useful in the advancement of their future views in life. It was impossible for her to make a probable conclusion, as to what particular line her boys would now be brought up to: this, of course, would be an

early consideration of their father must eventually depend on circumstance. In regard to her girls, there seemed a plan of respectable independence laid out for them; and to fit them for governesses she immediately determined to use all her exertions.

To this end, there were faults in Charlotte and in Isabel to correct; however reprehensible in their individuals, even in affluent circumstances, were they to prove the sources of much real independence in subordinate situations of life. The occasional indolence and careless inattention of Charlotte, and the vanity and pride of Isabel, were both likely to prove sources of perpetual weakness and inconvenience; and Mrs. G. lost no time in reasoning with them separately upon the subject, and presenting to them every motive which could induce them to conquer any thing that was unamiable. The affection of both the girls prompted them to earnest assurances that they would be *anything* their mother wished; and w

impression occasioned by her tender injunctions lasted, the indolence of Charlotte, and the vanity of Isabel, seemed absorbed in their attention to their mother's wishes.

Nor were the boys without faults, which it was particularly requisite they should correct. The pride of the studious and elegant-minded Edward was but too likely to be constantly his tormenter, in his transactions with the thousands who were likely to be his superiors in station; while the careless freedom of manner, and indifference to the opinions of others, which characterised the lively John, however to be endured from independence, were but ill-calculated to assist the progress of a lad who was to work, by dint of attention and perseverance, through some fagging situation of life.

The young people promised fairly, and their general conduct was consistent with their promises. But we shall see, in the course of our history, that no unpleasant habits are entirely conquered in a moment; ~~and~~ our young readers will be induced by ~~this~~, not to be disheartened under the

difficulties they may feel, in subduing propensities represented to them as un-able: their first attempts may fail, but severance will obtain every thing.

In the mean time, we will describe farmer's family, which occupied the house at the entrance of the chalk-pit, and which proved a satisfactory vicinity to the inhabitants of the cottage within; for, with this, the situation would have been not too lonely to secure its inhabitants, notwithstanding the rural beauties in which it embosomed.

Farmer Langford had rented his farm from the proprietors of the Fleetwood property, from the time of his marriage, which took place thirty-five years prior to the period of which we are speaking. Respectable, honest, and humane, he had brought up a numerous family; and sons, and as many daughters, had all left the parental roof, to engage in respectable situations in life. But one amongst number, (and the farmer blessed God for a rare occurrence,) had been unfortu-

is was the eldest daughter, who had d a grocer in the adjoining market-out whose husband had failed in business and died in despondency, leaving her ow, with a family of children totally ided for. The poor mother, in con-n weakly, and not very strong in under-ig, could not bear up against the ac-tion of misfortune, and quickly fol-her husband to the grave: her chil-ere received, by the old people at the with parental fondness; and they now, ie only aunt remaining single, formed ily of the farmer. This aunt, a pret-ing woman, about nineteen years of as the pride and delight of the rustic and her time was fully occupied be-the cares of her dairy and poultry, making up clothes for the three lit-s of her sister.

as not long before the industry of Langford attracted the observation of lardiner, who, in her walks with her n, from and towards the chalk-pit, scarcely fail to notice the assiduity

with which she was constantly following her occupations. When the ladies, towards whom she looked as her betters, passed the spot where she might be standing, she always looked up, and dropped a hasty and blushing courtesy; but she did not allow herself to be hindered, by stopping to look after them; or indulge a curiosity, which would not have been unnatural, in following, with her eyes, the flower-baskets of the young ladies, as they wound round the tangled foot-path which led from their sweet retreat. Mary continued at her work, and her cheerful countenance beamed with content and happiness.

Mrs. Gardiner had frequently, in their rambles through the fields, met the farmer, and had joined in conversation with him, when their road lay the same way. By so doing, she wished to pay her tribute of respect to his character; and, at the same time, to teach her children that deference for probity and respectability, in any situation in which it may be found, so fitting to be paid from the highest to the lowest. By

and not hitherto conversed with Mary: the stable girl seemed always so actively that she was unwilling to break in her time.

The morning, however, as they were passing, Isabel, whose curious observations had generally something to remark on Mary's occupation, made a dead stop, the little garden-wicket, as they passed her eyes eagerly followed the open she observed to be going on. One of the nieces was running with a lap-full of washing; another was carrying a broken cup, something like pap in it; the little one was running after, with a pan of water; and herself appeared with a hen, which she was endeavouring to struggle from her. "Wonder what she is going to do with it, mamma," said Isabel: "do stop a moment."

Mr. Gardiner and Charlotte now joined her; and also stopping before the gate, she looked up, and dropped her usual cry. Her eyes sparkled with pleasure;

and she looked as if she wished to be interrogated as to the occasion of her delight.

"You are very busy, as usual," said Mrs. Gardiner, with kindness.

"Yes, Madam," replied Mary, dropping another courtesy; and considering this as a sufficient permission to impart her good news, she continued: "I have not had such a beautiful brood, Ma'am, since mother gave up the care of the poultry to me: I have got eighteen, all healthy, strong chicks;" and she then stooped to place the hen in the coop which had been prepared for her.

"What, all from one hen?" said Charlotte, pressing forward towards the gate.

"Yes, Miss, all," replied Mary, approaching the group at the gate: "would you be pleased to come in and look at them, Miss," continued she, lifting the latch.

The girls looked at their mother, whose countenance assented to the proposition, and they directly crowded to the coop, to see the eldest of the little girls turn out the brood, one by one, from her pin-afore, the impatient hen within.

admiration of the children was expressed in strong terms; and they had such a variety of questions to ask, on the subject of poultry, that Mrs. Gardiner feared their intended stay might encroach too much on Mary's precious time. Mary, however, replied, that she had nothing particular to do at present, but to feed the rest of the poultry; "and, perhaps," added she, "young ladies and gentlemen might like to see any broods of ducks and turkeys."

"Yes, that we should," said Isabel, starting immediately forwards.

"Why we, mamma?" said Charlotte.

"I had already bounded across the little bridge, which separated the garden from the adjoining paddock; and Mrs. Gardiner, having no objection, the rest of the party accompanied Mary.

"I wish we might keep poultry, mamma," said Charlotte, as they proceeded: "I should like to have a brood of chickens to take care of."

"I am quite sure that you would take

care of them," replied Mrs. Gardiner, "I should have no objection, at all, to such an addition to our family; but I am fearful that, after the novelty was over, your charges might be neglected; and it is quite impossible that they should be kept, unless you take the entire management."

"Oh, I should not wish to have them, if I could not take care of them myself," said Charlotte.

"Might not I help you?" said Isabel, taking her sister's hand.

"Well, we shall see about it," said Mrs. Gardiner, who, observing that Mary Langford, surrounded by her feathery tribe, was waiting till they should be nearer, hastened her children forward.

Mary exhibited a very fine show, both of turkeys and ducks; and half an hour was spent very pleasantly, in seeing the various roosting places prepared for all of them. Mrs. Gardiner then expressing her thanks to Mary for her kindness, and promising, at her request, to pay another visit to her poultry

proceeded in her walk with the young party, who had all been well amused by the delay.

CHAPTER VI.

PRIDE MORTIFIED.

In the evening, while the children were at tea with their mother, there was a little gentle tap at the door; and on its being opened by James, Mary Langford made her appearance, accompanied by one of her little nieces. She brought with her a duck and a hen, and the little girl had a basket of eggs. Mary flushed and hesitated as she approached Mrs. Gardiner, who went out to speak to her, and at length explained that she had bought a hen for one of the young ladies, a duck for the other, both wanting to sit a nest of eggs for each.

The delight of the girls was extreme; their impatience scarcely waited for their mother's permission to accept the present; when it seemed doubtful whether the giver or the receivers were best satisfied. James was immediately dispatched for straw, to make a nest for each, and Mary requested to assist the little girls in setting the eggs. This she did with great humour, after which Mrs. Gardiner requested her to sit down and take a cup of tea. Mary for a long time refused, but at length she was persuaded by Isabel to take a chair, and she declined the tea; and little Sarah, who had been the bearer of the eggs, had no objection to receive a large slice of cake. John good-naturedly fetched her from the cupboard.

During the stay of Mary in the room, Edward Gardiner had, unobserved by the rest of the party, retired from the room. He had not been missed by his mother, who was running for James to remove the tea-tray.

"Where is Edward?" said Mrs. G

other children, as James entered the

children looked at each other, for had not before missed their brother.

“Do you know where Master Edward is?”

Mrs. Gardiner to James.

James hesitated and coloured; then re-

he believed he was in the garden, and

went out of the room. He did not re-

quire the bread and butter, but Newman

instead, and the change excited Mrs.

Gardiner's curiosity. “Why did not James
again?” she inquired of Newman.

“Why, if I must speak, Ma'am,” said

Newman, “but I know James will be angry

because he wanted to hide the black lump in

the place which Master Edward gave him.”

“How?” said Mrs. Gardiner, much hurt:

“Would he lift his hand against James?”

“Why, I hope you will not be very angry

with Master Edward, Ma'am,” said Newman,

trembling in her eye at the possibility

of being punished; “but you know he

did like conversing with his inferiors,

and the rest of the young gentlefolk, you

know; so he came out of the parlor. Mary Langford was asked to sit down, and she stole away down to the gate. Well, leaning with his back there, when he went down to open it for Mary; and when he was asked to move, he almost threw the little girl down, he moved so roughly. James had shut the gate, he could not say, saying to Master Edward, It was a mistake. He was not so gracious to his inferiors as his father and brother; and this offended him, so that he directly gave James a great box with his fist. But I am sure, and so is everybody, that he is very sorry, for he burst out crying directly."

During this explanation, Newman sat round and round the highly-polished table over which she was leaning; and when she ceased speaking, Mrs. Gardiner said to him, "I desire Master Edward to come to me."

The young culprit, however, was standing at the door, and James behind him, prepared to accompany him into the room. Mrs. Gardiner, however, desired both of them to retire, when she thus addressed them

‘I am quite astonished, Sir,” was Mrs. Garliner’s beginning, in a tone of assumed severity; but the subdued countenance of her son occasioned her to alter her manner: ‘I could not have believed that I had a child whose character exhibited such unamiable traits as yours has done this evening, Edward; and I can only say to you, that unless you endeavour to correct your faults, you will stand a chance of forfeiting my good opinion and affection also.”

Poor Edward burst into tears, and moved close to his mother’s chair, while a sympathising drop trembled in the eyes of the rest of the young party. But all remained respectfully attentive to their mother.

“These very unamiable traits,” continued she, “have led you to the commission of two very great faults: in the first place, to treat with haughty unkindness a person from whom yourself and your sisters and brother were receiving a most good-natured act of civility; and in the second, it has betrayed you to an exhibition of glaring ingratitude and ungentlemanly forgetfulness. Notwithstanding

our difference in station, circumstances have laid every individual of our family under obligations to the servant against whom you have lifted your hand; for you cannot be otherwise than aware, that to continue in our service he has refused a situation, which to him would have been an independence; and that for our sakes he undertakes, for a very trifling remuneration, the most menial offices, when it was at his option to have done little or nothing, with a handsome salary."

"Yes, I know it, mamma; I know it all," said Edward, still sobbing; "and I am sure I love James, and would not wish to hurt him. I told him so, indeed; but I was in a passion, and did not know what I did."

"And while you are in a passion," calmly replied Mrs. Gardiner, "you may strike one of your sisters, or your brother, or myself, as well as poor James; and you may inflict an injury upon us, likely to be more lasting than the black lump on his face."

"No, I am sure I should not do that mamma; at least I hope I should not," said

Edward: "but I felt so angry at being reproved by James."

"I acquit James of every thing like presumption in the remonstrance he used with you," said Mrs. Gardiner; "he never appears to forget the distance which his situation requires of him; nor to think that his remaining with us at this time would prove any excuse for undue liberties on his part. I think I can answer for James having addressed you with propriety: his remark, if made respectfully, was natural, from one who served your father and mother before your birth, and who, I believe, feels an interest for all of you, very different from that of a common servant."

"No: indeed, Mamma, James spoke very kindly, and I only was to blame," said Edward, pressing close to his mother, but not venturing to indulge his feelings by throwing his arms round her neck.

"I am willing to think you are sorry for the unpleasant occurrence which has happened," said Mrs. Gardiner, repressing for a few moments the wish she felt to press her little boy

in her arms; "but it is not alone sufficient, after the commission of a fault, to feel sorry; something besides is necessary, and this I think you have a sufficient sense of justice to perceive."

"I did beg James's pardon, mamma," said Edward; "and he said he was sure he thought nothing at all about it."

"James is a kind-hearted fellow, and cannot bear to see any of you in trouble, particularly if he fancies himself the occasion of it," said Mrs. Gardiner; "but he is not the only person you have offended."

"I have offended God, mamma," said the little boy with a hesitating and trembling voice, and laying his head on his mother's shoulder.

Mrs. Gardiner could no longer resist her emotion, and she tenderly kissed the forehead of her child. "Yes, you are right, my child," said she; "but I was at that moment alluding to Mary Langford, whom you certainly treated with rudeness, and to whom will be necessary to offer an apology."

A more disrelishing task could not be

n imposed upon poor Edward, for it in-
ered most nearly with his prominent foi-

He made, however, no resistance, and
s. Gardiner kindly offering to be his com-
ion to the farm-house, his hat was soon
ained, and they went out together.

hey had not proceeded far before they came
ight of the objects of their pursuit, who were
ted on the stile which separated the pro-
ty of the farmer from the plantation of the
amented cottage. Immediately on per-
ving Edward, Mary Langford rose from
stile, and directed Sarah to get out of
way; and the little girl, bearing fully in
nd the rudeness of the little gentleman at
cottage gate, needed not a second direc-
n to clear the way with the utmost expe-
ion.

"Do not let us displace you," said Mrs.
rdiner to Mary, who was moving onwards;
y little boy and I came in pursuit of you,
he wishes to beg your pardon for his
leness to-you when you left my house just
v."

Oh! Sarah did not mind it, I am sure,

Ma'am," said Mary with the utmost good humour; "and Master Gardiner did not mean to hurt her, I dare say. I am quite sorry you should think any thing of it."

"I beg your pardon, Mary," said Edward, placing his hand in hers, and looking very much ashamed of himself.

Mary kindly begged that he would say no more about it; and Mrs. Gardiner saying that she hoped he never would forget himself so completely again, the parties separated, and each retired to their respective homes. In the course of the evening Mrs. Montefors strolled in, and cheerfulness and comfort were again restored to the young group.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHALK-PIT.

A FEW days after this, while all the young people were engaged in their separate stud-

with their mother, their attention was attracted by the sound of voices approaching very near the house. A feeling of curiosity was instantly evident throughout the circle; but none ventured to leave the table but John, who, with an irresistible impulse, started up, and flew to the window which overlooked the wild part of the chalk-pit open to the passing boat-passenger.

"Such nice-looking girls," said John, as he melted upon the window-seat; "and so smart!"

Isabel was on the point of rising to see the smart girls; but Mrs. Gardiner's rather sharp rebuke to John, for allowing his attention to be so idly diverted, prevented her doing so, and brought John back to his place.

"I wish I could make your attention as immovable as Charlotte's and Edward's," said Mrs. Gardiner, "while you are engaged with your books. You never will make any progress, while you permit yourselves to be so easily diverted from what you are doing." This remark occasioned a general atten-

tion, and a dead silence ensued; when, few minutes, the party were again disturbed by the noise of hammers and chisels, workmen were employed in picking cl from the rock. Every now and then a collection of stones seemed tumbling down shelving bank, and peals of laughter accompanied every rattling handful.

The children were all somewhat disturbed, and John and Isabel could scarcely refrain from moving. They watched the countenance of their mother, who was busily employed with her needle, but they could receive in it no permission to be idle; and their eyes, therefore, again were fixed upon their less

Presently a louder crash was heard: this was followed by another fit of laughter, John and Isabel, no longer able to resist their sympathetic merriment, joined aloud in this hearty expression of gladness.

Mrs. Gardiner again looked up, in order to fix the attention of her children, but she could not herself withhold a smile.

"Do let us go and see what they

ing, mamma," said Isabel, encouraged by his smile.

"May we just go for a moment to the edge of the underwood," said John, rising hastily; he spoke, and moving towards the door.

"You may go for five minutes," said Mrs. Gardiner; "but do not go near enough to intrude upon the strangers, or interfere with their occupations, whatever they may be."

John and Isabel were already out of the room. "Do you wish to go, my love?" said Mrs. Gardiner to Charlotte.

Charlotte was contented with taking a step at the window, for there was a reserve in her disposition which shrunk from the observation of strangers; and Edward, whose sole attention was then fixed upon a difficult Latin lesson, did not even stir from his table.

John and Isabel rather exceeded their five minutes, and when they did return, it was at the request that the term of their absence be extended; for "it was such fun, and *there were such nice girls*; and Isabel wished *for a hammer and chisel too*."

"They looked up and talked to Isamma," said John; "and I think they admired her very much," added he, significantly lowering his voice; "for they whispered to each other about her, and they seemed very anxious she should come down and assist."

"And what can they be knocking the chalk to pieces for?" said Charlotte, incited to be anxious by Isabel's representation.

"Oh, they are looking for curiosities," replied Isabel, eagerly; "and they say there are a great many, and I should so like to go and help them."

"I am sure they have found one," said Edward, drily, "if they have met with you, Isabel."

"And I am sure they did not think of one," tartly replied Isabel, at the same time throwing her bright hair off her forehead.

"No, that they did not," said John, who was his sister Isabel's constant companion and admirer: "I am sure they were very much pleased with her, and"——

It is not of importance to discover the

ort of impression made by Isabel,"
ed Mrs. Gardiner; "and I wish, my
hildren, you were not so apt to in-
in these little recriminating remarks.
e quite aware, Isabel, that, situated
are, it is not convenient to me to form
w acquaintances; therefore, I hope
ll express no dissatisfaction, when I
I would rather you did not return to
lk-pit at present. I had no idea of
ing otherwise than observe the young
at a distance, or should not have al-
you to go out at all."

: Isabel did not receive this disappoint-
ite as placidly as she might have done;
s. Gardiner took no notice of the tran-
loud which overspread her features,
the time she was taking off her tippet
ves; and a smile of good-humour was
d to her countenance, as she replaced
by her mother's elbow.

little strife with inclination was not
ed by Mrs. Gardiner: her manner to
was particularly kind and approving;

and, when the books were closed, told the young people all to fetch their baskets, for it was her intention to take them to Fleetwood.

This information produced general satisfaction; and all were in preparation, when Isabel appeared with a large hand-basket under the weight of which her slender frame was much inconvenienced.

"And what are you purposing to do with that basket, dear Isabel?" said Mrs. Gardiner, in some surprise.

Isabel was not sorry to take the opportunity which an answer to this inquiry opened for; and placing her basket on the ground, she looked at her sister.

Charlotte blushed. "I thought, perhaps, mamma," said she, "we might also do something curious; so I begged Isabel to prepare a basket."

"Well, I have no objection to your making geological researches, as well as other young people," said Mrs. Gardiner, smiling; "but I must decline the attendance of a basket and implements you have pro-

for the purpose: we must get something of a lighter description than this to work with." And, as she spoke, Mrs. Gardiner took from the basket a very large hammer, which had been begged from James.

"But at present let us proceed in our walk," said Mrs. Gardiner, "and Mrs. Montefort may, perhaps, assist you in your preparations; for Captain Montefort has made very large collections of minerals, and she herself is not entirely ignorant on the subject."

The young people proceeded onwards; but, instead of taking the regular path, made a little diversion to the rugged spot, where, a few hours before, the strokes of feeble hammers had so much engaged their attention. The quick eye of John was attracted by the bright shining of some sparkling substance, and he eagerly obtained possession of the treasure.

"What can it be?" exclaimed all the children at once.

"*Crystals*, of some sort," replied Mrs. Gardiner; "but I cannot define it nearer

however, take care of it, and you may learn perhaps, more about it at Fleetwood.

"What did you mean by *geological*, now, mamma," said Edward, who had been thinking it over, ever since his mother made use of the word some little time before.

"It is an adjective from Geology," replied Mrs. Gardiner; "and Geology means a science which embraces the study of the earth in general; of its plains, hills, mountains; and of the relative positions of the masses of which they are composed. I give its definition in the words of a geologist, or a professor of geology, that I may commit no error on a subject in which I am so little conversant. And does this make it intelligible to you?"

"Not quite, mamma," replied Edward; "for that seems to make it like geography, and I thought they were different things."

"Perfectly different, my love," replied Mrs. Gardiner: "as different as the arrangements of art and nature generally. In geology, you must remember the

can the natural formations of the earth, or the features it bears unassisted by man; and this will be evident to you, when your bearing in mind how impossible it would be for his greatest power to alter, in any manifest degree, the appearance of hills, plains, and mountains: but geography affects more the labours of man; inasmuch as it relates to the situation of country, division of territory, and national distinctions; in all of which, man has been an agent, although a very subordinate one."

"I understand, mamma," said Edward, "and thank you for the explanation. But I have one more question to ask: are Geology and Mineralogy exactly the same?"

"No," replied Mrs. Gardiner: "Geology teaches the general construction of the earth; Mineralogy has for its object *the study of mineral bodies in particular.*"

"Now I must thank you for the exact definition of *mineral*, if you please, mamma," said Edward.

"You understand the meaning of a mine, you not?" said Mrs. Gardiner.

A general assent was given to this.

"And miner?"

"One that works in a mine," quickly replied Isabel.

"And what meaning can you, from this affix to the word mineral, Edward?"

"Any substance coming from a mine."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Gardiner: "therefore, generally speaking, all substances dug out of the earth are minerals."

"I should so like to have a collection of minerals," said Charlotte.

"I have no other objection," replied Mr. Gardiner, "than a fear that pursuits of this sort might interfere with more necessary occupations. For we must constantly bear in mind, my dear children, that your time is not likely to be at your own disposal; and therefore, that it will be useless to acquire tastes which may prove to you constant sources of mortification. I object to nothing likely to lead to your admiration of the wonderful works of nature, and, through that, to an increasing reverence for the Creator *so much* beauty and variety; but, situa

are, they must be made subordinate to any other employments."

The young people all promised that the proposed plan of geological pursuit should not lessen their assiduity in the prosecution of more important objects of attention; the remainder of the walk to Fleetwood was passed in arrangements relating to the distribution of the quantities of curiosities they expected to gain possession of. Where they were to keep them was a question of some moment; for they had very little room for unnecessary additions, in any part of the house; Mrs. Gardiner fairly told them, that the appearance of disorder or untidiness must be paid for by the forfeiture of their pleasures.

Many places were suggested, but that of Mr. Collins was most generally approved of, the purchase of a little cabinet; and as he had something of a mechanical turn, this was to be executed with ease.

Mr. Collins had not the slightest objection to what said Mrs. Gardiner; "and as I expect that your collection will be some time

in gathering, the tardy execution of a piece of furniture will not be of very importance."

"Oh, I will begin it this evening, ma," said John, eagerly, and studying his mother's countenance, to discover the meaning of what she had said.

"And be tired of it before noon to-morrow," replied Mrs. Gardiner, coolly, "these are of the hen-coop, which you undertake to make; which you have neglected, and which, perhaps, will be spoiled for the chickens to-morrow morning."

John blushed and hung his head, walked a few paces, in silence, by the side of his mother.

"You more than half-finished the box, I believe," said Mrs. Gardiner, "this morning you commenced it; and, I remember, seemed so interested in your occupation, that none of the entreaties of your friends could draw you to a game of play: you appeared almost angry, at last, that she should have a wish to claim any of your attention, and told her, as you were employed

it was unkind in her to attempt to draw you away. It appears now, however, that it was the delight of something new that engrossed your thoughts, and not any very particular desire to please or assist me."

"Will you allow me to return and finish it now, mamma?" said John, gently sliding his hand within his mother's arm, a tear at the same time trembling in his eye.

"This facility of execution, but variable-ness of will, my dear boy," said Mrs. Gardiner, shaking her head, as she affectionately pressed the hand of her son, "will prove to you most mortifying inconveniences, as you advance in life: they are even such at present. You are now, I plainly see, uncomfortable, that you have not accomplished what you had promised me you would perform; and you would have been much more so, if, on the appearance of the chickens, to-morrow, there had been no shelter provided for them. But of infinitely greater importance will it be to you, as you advance in it, when your credit, nay, even perhaps

your bread, may depend, not only in your facility in planning, but on your steadiness in executing the schemes you undertake.

John attended to all his mother said; and kissing the hand which was pressed on his forehead, promised to exercise a larger share of perseverance. The quick eye of Isabel now discovered Mrs. Montefort, through the underwood at a distance, and the young party soon surrounded their friend.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRAVERS FAMILY.

Mrs. MONTEFORT was walking, with the intention of visiting the chalk-pit. She had on that day received a letter from her husband, who was very inquisitive in geological researches; and who had directed her

to a spot, about two or three miles from her house, where, he had been informed, there were many shells, and other fossile remains, to be met with. Though unacquainted with the newly-awakened ardour of her young friends, in the same pursuit, she thought that, in all probability, they would like the drive thither; therefore, after ordering the barouche, she was going herself to fetch them.

On hearing the incident which had given the Gardiners a wish for a little groping, Mrs. Montefort said she also must come to the chalk-pit on the same embassy; but as every thing was ready for the more distant objects of pursuit, if agreeable to Mrs. Gardiner, they would now proceed as she first proposed.

"Do you know who the young people are, who excited so great an interest in some of us?" said Mrs. Gardiner, as she took Mrs. Montefort's arm, and her children went on before.

"Their name is Travers," replied Mrs. Montefort: "their father is a man of inde-

pendent property, living on one of the estates in the neighbourhood; themselves, are the most eccentric persons I know. They are brought up without restraint for every masculine pursuit, which has ready made them bold, impudent, and presuming; they all scamper after their hare with the utmost ardour and dash, and where a stone-barred gate is no obstacle to their progress; and long before the women can expect, in every thing they will be totally unlike their sex.

“What a strange infatuation!” said Mrs. Gardiner; “and can a mother see”——

“Unfortunately they have neglected Mrs. Montefort; “nor are they. Their father, as he says, wants children, and, as he has no boys, his girls must supply their place, and acquiesce in which may capacitate them for the indulgence of his whims.”

“And how are they *naturally* improved?” inquired Mrs. Gardiner: “have they any *quaintance* with them?”

"es," replied Mrs. Montefort, "they and then spend a day with me, when I am in the country: their father is an old friend of the Montefort family, and I cannot help but ask them occasionally to my house. I do not find them unpleasant; for they are so little accustomed to see any company of females, that I believe they feel a restraint when thrown into their society; and I am much mistaken if, in the country set, there is not a much greater proportion of amiable feeling than is allowed to appear generally."

As they here arrived on the top of an eminence that they had just been mounting, Mrs. Montefort and Mrs. Gardiner stopped to take a breath, and turned round to view the beautiful sweep of country behind them.

"Where they are, at this moment," observed Mrs. Montefort.

"Where," said Mrs. Gardiner, turning her eye to the spot where her friend pointed.

"There, yonder, just by the edge of the wood."

"Two of them have just jumped into the water."

a boat, and the other has just them. Now they are pushed off."

"Impossible!" said Mrs. Gardiner have no attendant."

"Their father will allow them turned Mrs. Montefort: "he say old enough to shift for themselves must learn to do so."

"About what age are they?" Mrs. Gardiner, with a sigh; for a maternal bosom could not see such a young girl every thing like propriety, without feeling of sympathy.

"The eldest is between seventeen and eighteen, I think," said Mrs. Gardiner; and the youngest, who is by far the most amiable, and most like a woman, is younger than Charlotte."

Isabel here came running back to them.

"John says, mamma, he is sure there are no girls in that boat: they are not," added she, in a tone of doubtful inquiry.

"They are, indeed, my dear," replied Mrs. Gardiner; "but you

THE TRAVERS FAMILY.

express your surprise. They are the Miss Travers, the young ladies who paid a visit to our chalk-pit this morning, and who are very much to be pitied."

"Why, I think they seem very happy, mamma," replied Isabel: "they seem to be always amusing themselves, and doing what they like."

"Neither of which, I fear, will secure their happiness or respectability," replied Mrs. Gardiner: "study and employment sharpen our relish for leisure and amusement, as you have been frequently brought to acknowledge; and you will I think allow so, that, when left to plan your own pursuits, you never do it so satisfactorily as when they are arranged for you."

You have always something to answer, very thing," replied Isabel, with great humour; "and can always prove, in the event, that you are right, and I wrong, mamma."

"I am thankful, my sweet girl," answered Mrs. Gardiner, with a kiss, "that your dis-

position is so open to the slightest t
tion of error."

"The Misses Travers have not a
mother as you, Isabel," said Mrs. Mor
taking the other hand of her little fav
"or they might have been very differer
what they are: at present their mann
such, that they are stared at by eve
but admired and loved by none."

The idea of not being loved and ad
was sufficient to convince Isabel she
not wish to resemble the Misses Traver
she had not yet seen enough of them to
from her own observation, that this w
sitively their case.

The party now arrived at Fleetwoo
the carriage having just driven up
door, they were soon seated, and on
road to the neighbouring chalk-pit.

GEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES.

CHAPTER IX.

GEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES.

THE repository of curiosities to which Mrs. Montefort now introduced her young friends, was, perhaps, even more picturesquely situated than the spot in which their present residence was fixed. Neither ornament nor cultivation had been allowed to interfere with the playful dispositions of nature: excepting where the pickaxe and shovel of the chalk-diggers had been at work, she remained unrudged on, and undisturbed. Their excavations, though made without design, formed appropriate breaks in the limestone, of which the sides were composed; along the effect of light and shade amongst unequal and craggy fissures, and opening silent chasms for the intervention of hanging vegetation. On one side it rose perpendicularly, and untractably rugged, to a height of some hundreds of feet;

and it was to the bottom of the the curious resorted, to obtain their cabinets. The men were nately, at work, and the young ed around them, anxiously strokes which were to lay open things they were seeking,

"Remember," said Mrs. G drawing back the eager Isabel Montefort who came to be neighbours of the chalk-diggers, and if you crowd around them, she of obtaining what she wishes."

"Oh, we shall give all w Montefort," replied John, alv an excuse for his darling Isab

"And how shall you know any, my dear young knight Montefort, placing her arm on of the smiling boy, and kissing sun-burnt cheek.

"Oh! I had forgotten the but any thing that shines I would like."

"I will resign all claim to

," replied Mrs. Montefort, "for that is the object of my pursuit."

"You will not resign that, I dare say,"

John, starting eagerly forward as a beautiful cluster of crystals fell from the rock.

"It is yours if you wish for it," replied Mrs. Montefort: "I have many specimens as handsome, or even handsomer than that. But do you know what it is?"

"No; but it is very beautiful."

"It is quartz, or rock-crystal," rejoined

Mrs. Montefort, "and occurs in larger or smaller quantities amongst all flints. This is a handsome piece, and appears more so, perhaps, to you, because it is a novelty. But if

I continue to turn your attention towards it you will be surprised at the frequency with which you will meet with even more brilliant pieces, and wonder that they never attracted your observation before. You can-

follow the labours of a stone-breaker in a common turnpike-road, when the sun is shining on his work, without being dazzled by the brilliant masses his hammer exposes to our view."

As much delighted as astonished, the children continued with their eyes upon the clusters of limestone precipitated by the strokes of the hammer.

"Will you thank me or not from Montefort to Mrs. Gardiner, the flame which the Traverses kindle in my young friends?"

"Oh! thank you, certainly," said Mrs. Gardiner: "I seize on every opportunity of gaining information for the benefit of my friends; and am always pleased to find that amusements are of a nature to promote improvement at the same time."

"In my opinion," observed Mr. Montefort, "the more pursuits of the mind people are led to delight in, the more they give to the body; and the remedies you propose for idleness and the abuse of time can amuse herself for an hour in a chalk-pit, or in picking a fossil, and endeavouring to find its name. I may occasionally be subject to a smile from the dissipated and the idle. *I am convinced that while I*

these tastes, she is treasuring in her mind a relish for enjoyments which will always atone to her for the absence of more flattering, but less satisfactory relaxations."

"I can have but one objection to the pursuit," observed Mrs. Gardiner, "and that is, a fear lest it should give any disrelish for the more common occupations of life."

"It is only when the fancy is allowed to range at large, and unconstrained," replied Mrs. Montefort, "that it yields so undue an ascendancy. If early taught to feel that inclination must ever be subservient to duty, however hard at first the lesson, it is never impossible to learn it. It always has been your maxim with your children, that *what they like* is nothing, what they *ought* to do *every* thing; and I cannot conceive that you will have much difficulty in teaching your girls that they must mend stockings as well as arrange stones; or your boys, that pounds, shillings, and pence must be objects of greater attention, than the composition of a *flint*, or the stratification of a mountain."

Mrs. Gardiner smiled at this remark; their conversation was here interrupted by Charlotte, whose attention had been attracted by the progress of the men, without for an instant diverted by the frequent exclamations of Isabel and her brothers at the beautiful things they had found. She placed between her finger and thumb a deformed bivalve shell, and, with an eye-light, she silently presented it to Mrs. Montefort.

"Ah! that is one of the very things which Mr. Montefort is so anxious to obtain," said Mrs. Montefort; "and how came your dear Charlotte, to make so good a guess?"

"Why I thought," said Charlotte, her heart palpitating with pleasure, "I was sure I had heard of shells being found in the pits, and I just thought it might be what you wanted."

"Well, I am very much obliged to you, dear girl," said Mrs. Montefort: "I will keep this shell for your sake, and tell you see you must keep for mine."

"Oh! I hope I shall soon find :

said Charlotte, and immediately returned to her post by the men.

“And all this time, while I thought Charlotte was standing like a dunce,” said John, “and not choosing to be interested about what we were looking after, she was in search of the very thing that Mrs. Montefort wished for, and had the luck to find it too.”

“And how often this is the case,” observed Mrs. Gardiner; “yet I have difficulty enough to convince you, even with proof before you, of what infinite advantage this quiet perseverance is, over bustling eagerness and hurry.”

“But for once bustling eagerness has been successful,” said Isabel, conscious that the last observation was as applicable to her as to John: “look what a beauty!” added she, pressing her laughing face against her mother’s, and exhibiting the shell.

Mrs. Gardiner felt half inclined to chide the pertness with which Isabel’s good-humour was occasionally alloyed; but the warm embrace with which, on the following mo-

ment, the treasure was presented to Charlotte, closed her half-opened lips.

"I am glad I found the next, for the pleasure of giving it to you," said she, as she presented it to her sister.

"I shall value it as your gift," replied Charlotte, just allowing herself time to kiss the cheek of Isabel, and then continuing her eager look out.

"But how is it these shells are found here?" inquired Edward, who seemed to have been studying the question some time before it was asked: "the sea is not near us, the river is at some distance, and how could these shells have been conveyed hither?"

"How, but by an Almighty hand, my dear boy?" replied Mrs. Montefort: "as shell-fish, of which there are very many species, are the natural inhabitants of the sea, it is obvious to conclude that the sea once covered the parts of the earth where they are now found in such abundance; and that, on the recess of the sea, they were left in the earth, and gradually became incorporated with it."

"You remember the account of the deluge in the Bible?" asked Mrs. Gardiner.

"Oh, yes," replied Edward; "but do you think these shells have been here ever since that, mamma?"

"I entertain no doubt of it," replied Mrs. Gardiner.

"The whole earth is full of collections of shells," observed Mrs. Montefort, "some of one sort and some of others, as they partake of the different kinds of earth amongst which they are thrown. These are in chalk, and therefore bear a near resemblance to chalk; but some are found in marble, and some in spar. In fact, there are so many different sorts, that, without a book, I am not sufficiently conversant with the subject to give you much information. But on our return to Fleetwood, remind me of it, and I will lend you a book that shall extend your knowledge."

Edward expressed his thanks, and was very careful not to return to the cottage without the proffered loan.

The men having now struck into a bed of shells, the young people found *an* employment in filling the baskets which Mr. Montefort's footman had prepared for collection; and sufficient having been obtained, it was proposed to return to the carriage. The footman and John took charge of the baskets, and went on before the rest of the party, when presently John reappeared, and running very fast towards the group just proceeding from the chalet, he eagerly exclaimed: "Gipsies! gipsies! Such a gang of gipsies!"

Isabel turned pale, and creeping up to her mother, slid her hand into hers.

"You little goose," said John, observing the alarm of his sister; "and what harm do you think the gipsies will do to you?"

"I do not wish to justify Isabel's untimely fears, John," observed Mrs. Gardiner; "I do not consider it very kind in you to turn them into jest. Gipsies are an idle, wandering set of people," continued she, addressing her little girls; "and our hen-roosts and hedges are frequently, I believe, injured

their depredations ; but, generally speaking, the robberies they commit are of a petty nature, and their situation should claim our sympathy rather than excite our dread."

"I do not know why they should excite our sympathy, either," said John : " they always seem to me to be a merry, joyous set; and their wandering life, in summer, I should think must be delightful."

"Hilarity and merriment certainly very frequently appear in the midst of their motley group," replied Mrs. Gardiner; " but when we consider that this mirth, and indeed their very necessities, are supplied by the constant practice of dishonesty, and the contempt of every duty of society, it certainly is enough to move our pity for such thoughts and libertine creatures."

As the party had continued moving they now came in view of the tattered tribe, which had claimed the attention of John, and confirmed the fears of Isabel. The cavalcade was a very numerous one, and consisted of persons of both sexes and of all ages; some in a crazy tinker's cart, drawn by a team of

ragged foresters; some on bare-boned do keys; the infants of the party in pannies slung across the backs either of women, or the stubborn, though much-enduring animals before mentioned; and foot-stragglers, the petitioners for alms, the tawny divers in futurity, or the tutored practisers of fly-pilfering, were scattered here and there as every where, from the beginning to the end of the swarthy crew.

Isabel pressed close to her mother, as Charlotte, on being addressed by a handsome black-eyed lass, with a request to be told her fortune, sought the protection of Mrs. Montfort's arm. John himself did not feel quite at ease, for the whole party passed them close. He was for returning into the recess of the chalk-pit, and actually ran back, reminding of the remonstrance of Mrs. Montfort, for his chicken-hearted loss of courage.

He presently, however, returned, saying that the men were all gone; and Mrs. Gdiner entreating him not to be so foolishly fearful, they stood quietly upon a bank,

ample space for the passage of the wandering tribe.

They had all passed nearly out of sight, when our party were arrived at the carriage, when a general sensation of alarm was felt at seeing Edward among them. The young people looked at each other. Mrs. Gardiner's colour changed rapidly, but she observed that he must have stopped behind some flower or stone, and apologized to Mr. Montefort for his making the carriage stop.

"Do not gipsies sometimes steal children, mamma?" said Isabel, in a trembling tone of voice.

"Not very often, I believe, my love," replied her mother: "who can have put these ideas into your head, my child?"

Mrs. Gardiner, indeed, had no fear of Edward's having been harmed by the gipsies; she recollected having heard him express a wish to ascend the perpendicular cliff; and though it was very seldom that he ventured to act against her wishes, she almost feared that his natural inquisitiveness had tempted him

to transgress her injunctions, and himself to danger.

Mrs. Montefort desired the footman turn to the chalk-pit; but before he reach it, Edward appeared in sight, red and panting for breath, and with what appeared to be a bundle of rags in his arms.

"I have been running after the dog with this little thing," said Edward, placed the bundle on the grass, and sat quite out of breath beside it; "but I cannot overtake them; and the child screams so loud when I was running after them, and seemed so pleased when I turned back, that I am afraid they use it ill, and have let me blind them on purpose.

Aware of the unjustifiable feeling on which sometimes obscured the more amiable traits in her son's character, Mrs. G. could scarcely help smiling at the dirt which he had been pressing to his bosom. The more delightful sensation, however, of this first propensity to amusement, and of pleasure followed the conviction that he had so completely yielded to compa-

the bosom of her son. "Had my child never inhabited the cottage in the chalk-pit," thought she, "this unamiable propensity probably had never been subdued."

But what was to be done with the infant? While a consultation was held upon the subject, a young man made his appearance, who seemed, by his dress, to belong to the tribe which had just passed; and the little ragged creature instantly recognising his voice, held out its arms, and was received with smiles of gladness.

"Does this child belong to you?" asked Mrs. Montefort.

"Yes, and please your ladyship," replied the man: "I just left 'em a bit to see after his mother, and he crawled away."

"You are at some distance from your party," said Mrs. Montefort, at the same time putting a shilling into the man's hand.

"Thank your ladyship," answered the man: "yes, they are some way off now, and I hope never to be near them again." He was here retiring; but Mrs. Montefort, thinking there was less hardihood in his appear-

ance than in that of his companions him.

“Do you not agree amongst y then?”

“I ask pardon of your ladyship the man, “but I can’t stop now: m ill, and I should not have left her, l after the child.”

He then sprung out of sight, Montefort directed one of her serv was on horseback, to follow him, and if the state of his wife were real, and possible to give her any relief. Th then proceeded to Fleetwood, and the evening Mrs. Gardiner and h returned to their cottage.

CHAPTER X.

THE CABINET.

EARLY the next morning James inf *mistress* that he believed all the

were nearly hatched, for he heard a great piping under the hen; and before the young party seated themselves to their lessons, Mrs. Gardiner indulged them by accompanying them to the nest. The brood was complete, but Mrs. Gardiner knew not how to dispose of them; and as John had already felt so much at the failure of his promise in regard to the coop, she did not wish to add to his uneasiness, by making any further observation on the inconvenience it was likely to occasion.

“What a nice brood!” said Isabel.

“What a nice brood!” echoed John, jumping about and busying himself with great glee in handing the pepper-corns for the newly-hatched chickens. Then taking the hand of Isabel, they led the way to the green in front of the house, exclaiming: “Follow us, follow us, mamma.”

Mrs. Gardiner did as she was requested, and on arriving was pleased to find the coop completely finished, and prepared for the reception of the brood.

"And when was this completed?" said she, with a look of pleased surprise that rewarded John for his labour.

"This morning, mamma," replied he, with glowing smiles: "I was up before five, and had just finished it as we were called to prayers."

"Your character is re-established, my dear fellow," said his mother, with a kiss on his rosy cheek, "and I hope will never be lost again; for, depend upon it, the most showy efforts can be of no use, without a corresponding perseverance in exertion."

The happy John received this approving acquittal from his mother with heart-felt delight; and the chickens having now crept snugly under their mother, Mrs. Gardiner reminded her children that yesterday had been but an idle day, and that it was necessary to employ the present more studiously. The young people waited not a second hint of this sort, and presently seated themselves at their separate lessons.

They had not been occupied many minutes when they were interrupted by a servant

. Montefort's, who came with a message to her mistress to Mrs. Gardiner. The father of the young man who had hung behind the gipsy tribe, had given birth to another child; and the few rags which had been provided for its wants, had been conveyed forwards in the general baggage-cart. Mrs. Montefort, who was now only beginning to look for her own expected baby, had nothing ready for the purpose, and the claims on her donations of this sort had lately become so numerous, as completely to have exhausted her stores. She therefore applied to Mrs. Gardiner, who she thought would be most likely to assist in the present emergency.

Mrs. Gardiner very speedily made up a bundle, and inquiring of Mrs. Montefort's maid, as she did so, she learned that the poor woman in question had been taken, in the direction of her mistress, into the nekeeper's cottage, before the birth of her child, and that she had been supplied with every comfort and attention from Fleetwood. Hearing in haste, however, to return, Mrs.

Gardiner would not detain the se hear any more particulars; and pr in reply to a message from Mrs. M that she would see her during the 1 she dismissed her messenger, and 1 to her children.

The young people were all very 1 curious to hear something of the gi and his family; but as their moth really give them no further informat that of which they were in possessi as she particularly wished them to a themselves not to be disarranged 1 thing going forwards around them, seated herself quietly with them, making any observation upon what h pened.

Observing their mother's determin keep them at their lessons, and know that it would be of no use to ende shake it, the young people continu assiduously occupied for some tin length the clock struck one, and M *diner* desired Charlotte to fetch de

bonnet and her own, for that she wished her to accompany her to Fleetwood.

Charlotte immediately left the room, and her brothers and Isabel, looking alternately at each other and their mother, seemed to inquire if they were not also to be of the party.

Mrs. Gardiner was very apt at reading books. "Not to-day, my loves," said she, with a smile: "it is not convenient that you should go with me to-day. I understand all your eagerness to see these little gipsy babies, and to hear more of their parents, and in a few days, perhaps, you may be gratified; but to-day I only take Charlotte with me. You may put away all the books," continued she, as she closed the one which lay before herself, "and amuse yourselves as you please within the chalk-pit, during my absence. I shall be with you at dinner," added she, as she rose to take the bonnet which Charlotte brought her: "God bless you all: be good children." And giving them all an affectionate kiss, she left the cottage.

"Well now, what shall we do?" said Ma-

bel, ever eager after some scheme of diversion.

"I wish mamma would never go out without us," said John, throwing himself along the floor: "it is always so dull."

"Why do not you begin the cabinet?" asked Edward.

"No, I am tired of the cabinet," replied John.

"Why, I did not know it was begun," observed Edward, in return.

"No more it is," answered John; "but I am sure I never shall finish it, therefore it is of no use to begin it. Besides, we never shall get things to fill it, so what does it signify?"

"I wish I was as clever as you at carpenter's work," observed Edward, "and I should be glad to do it; for I have very great hopes of getting it filled, and the books upon mineralogy are so interesting."

Edward was at this moment reading a treatise on the subject, which had been lent him the day before by Mrs. Montefort. *He had already read it through once, and*

understand it as he perused it
ime.

ould not you help me?" said
so much to do by myself, and I
ou how to go on."

ell, I will," answered Edward;
the book in his pocket, he rose
y his brother to the little shed
is allowed to keep his carpenter's

shall have a run round the chalk-
if any thing more has fallen
ng," observed Isabel; and in a
e spun round the sloping bank
ed the cottage, and half hid it
ght of the passing passenger.

as at the foot of the bank, trim-
lge which separated it from the
ow. As Isabel passed he was
ment from his work, and looking
of lads who were playing at cricket
elow.

are nice young gentlemen, Miss,"
an, as Isabel approached, and
ing the same way as himself.

"Who? where, James?" said Isabel though her curiosity had been excited to know what the servant had been so steadily gazing at, she was not tall enough to gratify her wish of doing so.

James good-naturedly took off his best gloves, and lifting Isabel upon the table gave her a view of what was going on below. James went on with his work and Isabel stood for a few minutes watching the course of the ball, when she requested the servant to assist her again in descending that she might return to her brothers, and invite them to come and see the sport. Her ornaments and nails were soon scattered upon the ground, and Isabel again ascended the table with her companions.

"Who are they, James?" said John. He eagerly looked towards the boys with longing eyes.

"They are the gentlemen that live with Mr. Jackson at Deep Vale, Sir," replied James: "they have got a match against themselves, they tell me, and are going to treat the village lads with a dinner."

at that is pitched under the great ash tree."

"I cannot see them half well enough here," said John: "I have a great mind to go down the field."

"May-be mistress would not like you could go, Sir," said James; "and it would be a pity, you know——"

"Mamma did say we might amuse ourselves *within* the chalk-pit, I remember," said Isabel; "therefore she most likely meant we could not go out of it."

"But she did not know there was to be a cricket-match," replied John, "or she could have let us go."

"Well, she will be at home presently," said Edward, "and the cricket will not be over for some hours, so you may as well wait till she comes. Suppose we go back to the cabinet for a little while."

"No, I must watch the cricketers," replied John; "I have a great mind——" and John took a few steps in the path which led circuitously to the gate opening into the field, where the match was playing.

"You are a very foolish fellow go," said Edward, coolly turning heel, and seating himself on the limb of a tree which hung over the

"What think you, Isabel, shall said the wavering John.

"I think you had better not can see very well here," continuing she moved to a gap in the under had been made for the purpose a view of the field in question: the ball as distinctly as if I was them. There! there! what a w

John approached where she was and where she literally could, as every ball as it was struck; but nately, he had taken up the position would be much more delightful nearer than where he now stood, that he was blind to the advanced present situation, and only alive of running off to the field. After minutes wavering between the fear wrong and the desire of self-gra

length stole down the path, and was presently discovered by Isabel and Edward, almost at the other end of the field.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GIPSY'S STORY.

about half an hour after John had left the alk-pit, Mrs. Gardiner and Charlotte returned. Isabel and Edward immediately made their appearance to welcome their mother, and her surprise was immediately excited not to see John the foremost of the party.

"I dare say he is in his work-shop, busily plying on his cabinet," observed Charlotte: "I will go and fetch him."

Isabel and Edward looked at each other without speaking.

'Do you know, either of you, where your

brother is?" said Mrs. Gardiner, towards them. Neither for a moment "I am not accustomed to ask the satisfaction twice," observed Mrs. Gardiner, countenance becoming grave; for equivocation was a fault she rarely any of her children, she almost whether the confusion she saw before not the forerunner of something very

"He is in the field, mamma," replied, thoroughly convinced that her inquiry exacted a reply.

"And what business has he in the field," rejoined her mother: "I can tell, from your countenances, that both he and you knew it was what he should not do, and wonder you had not endeavoured to prevent him from going."

"We did, mamma," replied Isabella, turning into tears; "but——"

A little rustling was here heard among the trees, and presently poor John made his appearance, slowly ascending the hill, holding his handkerchief to his face.

"Whence do you come, Sir?" said

diner, as the little runaway tardily approached. The tone of voice in which Mrs. Gardiner spoke was too much for him to bear, and he burst into tears as he came up to the spot where she stood, and exclaimed: "Forgive me, mamma, and I will never disappoint you again." It was a most painful situation, for his eye had been completely blinded by a blow from a cricket-ball; and the sensation of shedding tears produced almost agony of pain.

Mrs. Gardiner could not witness unmoved the inconvenience her child was suffering, she was fearful of expressing all the tenderness and commiseration she felt on viewing his distressed and disfigured countenance. She took him by the hand, and making him rest his poor aching head against her bosom, led him to the house, gently remonstrating with him for the instability of his temper, and informing how the accident had happened which so painfully punished his act of disobedience.

"Had you waited my return," said Mrs.

Gardiner, as she tenderly b
 and eye of her child with co
 might this afternoon have gr
 natural for you to form, of 's
 eters near enough to watch th
 Montefort strolled with me t
 of the field, where Mr. Jack
 himself on a stile. They are
 Mr. Jackson, on her intro
 kindly said, that if any of n
 would like a near view of
 would place them, in the a
 they might do so without fi
 noyed by the balls. I ex
 obliged; and, notwithstandin
 with which I have lately for
 quaintance, allowed myself t
 to take you all to the field, w
 meet Mrs. Montefort, and pe
 labub to be provided in a p
 It would be unjust to deprive
 brother of this pleasure, be
 forfeited it by your indiscr
 hope it will prove another le

so easily led by inclination, at the expense of better motives."

The young people all begged that, as he could not join their party, their mother would not persist in accepting Mr. Jackson's invitation; but, however pleased Mrs. Gardiner might be with the kindness which prompted such a request, she had her welfare of her children too much at heart to accede to what would certainly have been most consonant to her own wishes. As they advanced in life, the world would save them from suffering the inconveniences consequent on a departure from uprightness, even if remorse should follow thickly on its commission: would it not then be mistaken indulgence, however gratifying to the feelings, to avert, or smooth away, the effects of youthful dereliction of duty? In some measure, however, to dissipate the cloud, which the fault of John had occasioned to gather on the countenances of the whole group, Mrs. Gardiner turned the conversation to her morning visit to Fleet-street, and gratified the numerous inquiries

ready to be made about the gipsy wife. She told them that she had a great deal of conversation with the gipsy, and had collected, from the relation of his story, that the origin of their being in the present miserable situation, might be traced to the inconsiderate hastiness of his father, when a boy. She then asked the gipsies if they would like to know the particulars of his history; and receiving a general affirmative, Mrs. Gardiner, sitting down, began to bathe John's face, in which time the swelling was somewhat subsided, before she began her relation as follows:

"George Adams (for that is the name of the poor fellow) was born of respectable parents, in a large village; and his situation in life was considered as good, in that of most of their neighbours. The general occupation was husbandry, and a little labour. The Adams', on the contrary, were themselves the employers of several gipsy children, earning a very comfortable subsistence in the joint grocer's and haberdashery shop, which supplied the village with :

othing, and many of domestic consump-

George was an only child; and as
, unfortunately for himself and his fu-
advantage, received indulgencies, which,
aps, circumstanced as he was, it was
ult to withhold, but which he did not
ess a disposition to bear without injury.

parents meant well towards him, and
not wish, as they frequently said, to spoil
; but they were a great deal employed
eir business, and had very little time to
ow on the improvement or education of
r child. He was sent, however, to
ol, where, being a very quick lad, he
acquired a great facility in reading, the
agement of his pen, and the calculation
igures. These were likely to be very
eficial to him, when introduced into his
er's business; and for this purpose, not
ressing any unwillingness to follow it, he
bound an apprentice when he reached
age of fourteen. In this situation he
found very useful; and being an active,
d-humoured boy, his parents had every

reason to hope that he would go and succeed, in the course of this respectable line of business in which he had been brought up.

“As George had never been put in the shop, before he entered it as a prentice; and as he had been very dear to the eye of his parents, they were acquainted with one strong failing which he possessed; but which he could not keep constantly with them, any length of time without their discovering. As is usual, to young people of lively disposition, he was very fond of seeing and doing every thing that was going forward in the world. This disposition, to a proper extent, was right to encourage. But George was too ready to indulge inclinations of this sort, so that what was unreasonable; for any thing occurred in the village neighbourhood, which he took a fancy to do, he hesitated not to gratify himself, without considering the importance of the occupation he might be following at the time. The consequence was that, in a very few

her found how little he was to be depended on; for although, under his immediate eye, every thing he undertook to do went on well, it depended entirely on the accidental objects of attraction near him, whether such would be the case during his absence.

“George always *promised* to be equally diligent, when left to himself, as when over-looked; and when these promises were made, there was no premeditated design of breaking them. But it was new to George to form wishes, without the power of gratifying them; it did not suit his restless and oscillating disposition, always to be under the control of circumstances; and notwithstanding the uneasiness which his father's grave manner occasioned him to feel, after every frequent instance of irresolution, temptation, in the shape of a regiment of soldiers, pack of hounds, or an itinerant mountebank, again offered itself, and was again yielded to.”

“‘*This will never do, George,*’ said his ~~her~~ more than once or twice, when lead-

ing back a customer, whom George's
lect of the shop had obliged to go
unserved. ' You will never make a n
business, if you cannot make up your
to think of the interests of your shop, l
the indulgence of your nonsensical whi

" George walked quietly behind the
ter, and in a few minutes his father
to him, with his usual good-humour;
his son, very soon getting accustomed t
slight rebukes his carelessness occas
grew more careless than ever; and
same time acquired a cunning whic
quently saved him from even these
symptoms of displeasure.

" Several years of his apprenticeship
ed off in this way, during which Mr. A
looked upon the faults of his son with
more complacency than might have be
pected; but his wife considered them
more serious light. It appeared to he
his want of perseverance was likely to
throw all the little snug independence t
wearied industry of her husband ha
by; and the habit he had acquired c

all his wishes, almost with impunity, led to her most mischievous in its ten-

Mrs. Adams, however, had always accustomed to look with deference to opinion of her husband: her own was weak; and she trembled, secretly, for what might be the consequences eventually to the child.

George became generally conversant with the affairs of his trade, more was frequently expected from him; and of more importance was it that he should be constantly and unremittingly assiduous. As so quick and able a boy, that he soon superseded the necessity of any assistant in the shop; and his father perceived that, when he saw the dependance in him, and how much rested on his own, self-interest, joined to other motives, would ensure the steadiness of his conduct. The journeyman, who had been employed by Mr. Adams for many years, now desirous of marrying, opened a shop in a village about four miles distant; as Mr. Adams thought would be an

additional stimulus to his son; for although the distance was such that it was not like to injure himself, provided every attention was continued to his old customers, it was yet so near, that it would be possible to reach it, if driven by inattention, or by any other cause, from the old-established shop.

"Mrs. Adams very much dreaded the result of this arrangement, but her husband ridiculed her fears; and for some weeks, the ready alacrity of George gave Mr. Adams subject of triumph, and quieted the fears of his wife. There had actually been a cricket-match played within half a mile of the shop, and George had not shown the slightest disposition to witness it; and so confident was his father, that all his hopes in his son were now going to be realized, that he resolved on taking a journey to London, the following week, to give orders for a fresh assortment of tea and grocery.

"On the very afternoon of the day that Mr. Adams set off for London, that corrupter of the morals and steady habits of the better-conditioned lower ranks, in

re of a travelling company of comedians, arrived in the neighbourhood, and a list of their performances was left at Mr. Adams's shop, to be exhibited in the window. Tight-rope, slack-rope, Mademoiselle Somebody, and Madame Somebody else; dancing, singing, full band of music—favourite actors—excellent accommodations—two nights only—and———moonlight! What a string of delightful incitements to turn the heads of all the apprentices and servant-maids in the populous village of——. Poor George was among the number; and one, two, three, four customers came in, before he noticed them sufficiently to make the accustomed inquiry of, what do you please to want? Mrs. Adams, who was sitting at work, in the little parlour behind the shop, observing several persons come in, put down her stocking, and came to offer her assistance. Her heart sunk, as she saw the subject of George's distraction, which he hurried into the window as she appeared; but she said nothing, and the shop was so full for some hours, that there

was ample employment for both. At dinner-time arrived, the press of business obliged them to take their meal separately. George continued occupied till late in the evening, when he was glad to get his rest and retire early to bed.

“ Thus ended the first day of temptations, happier for George than for several of his fellows in the village. Unceasing occupation and his mother's tender but watchful care had imposed something like resolution on him, and he slept quietly and sweetly, the fatigue arising from respectable and laudable exertion. The next morning, Adams received a letter from her sister, who was ill, and wished to see her. She hesitated a few moments; but the messenger who brought the dispatch, saying that she believed she was not expected to return through the day, she ventured to accompany him back; saying to her son, as he went out, that the whole management of the business would, for a few hours, be on his shoulders, and she entreated him not to leave *his back on the shop* for a moment.

THE GIPSY'S STORY.

George promised; and as his mother
off, in the little chaise-cart her sis-
sent to fetch her, he resolved scru-
y to attend to her advice. But a
of an hour had not elapsed, before
of temptation presented itself, in the
of a bill of fare for the present even-
performance, at the barn theatre. It
positively the last night: the other
's representation had been received
abounded applause; and that of the
was to be infinitely superior in every
. Such an opportunity had scarcely
resented itself before in that village,
ow soon another might offer, it was
ble to tell. To-day was not at all
day: yesterday it would have been
ble to have gone; but the day after
-day there was generally very little
and by six o'clock in the evening
ould most likely be nothing. George
quite determine to go, as he put the
he window, but he did not quite de-
not to go; and of every customer

who appeared, he inquired about the
and every body who had been, spoke
with delight.

“ ‘ Were not you there, George?’
Ned Cozens, one of the idlest lads in the
lage: ‘ I thought you would have been there
because it is just the thing you would like
I suppose you will go this evening; and
you will give me a call, as you go by,
go with you.’

“ ‘ I do not know,’ began George.

“ ‘ Oh, I know you will,’ said Ned: ‘ I
will quite enjoy it. I shall expect you
call,’ added he, as he threw down the
key for his mother’s snuff on the counter.
Then running out of the shop, on
another of his idle companions through
window, he left George to meditate
impression his persuasions had made.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION OF THE GIPSY'S STORY.

As George continued his occupation through the day, his eye was continually wandering to the enticing invitation to amusement, displayed in his window; and the consequence was, as is too generally the case, where an early habit of self-denial has been unacquired, that his wavering resolution at length ceased entirely to operate, and he determined, for this once, to indulge the inclination he had formed, to know what sort of thing a theatrical representation was. Six o'clock arrived, and his mother was not returned: she certainly would not return to-night, and there had been nothing to do in the shop for the last hour. Doubtless all the people were going to the play, and why should he not go too? The shutters were very soon fastened up; and having strictly charged the little boy who was kept to run errands, on no account to leave the house,

George put the key of the money-draw into his pocket, and repaired to the play. The performance to George was very captivating; nothing could exceed the fun and merriment it occasioned, both in himself and in Ned Cozens, his companion; and, on arriving at home, as his mother was not returned, and the boy's report was that no one had wanted him in his absence, he was not at all dissatisfied that he had been.

"The next morning another play-bill arrived: the company had been induced to stay another evening. Business was not so slack this evening, but still the loss would be but trifling, and it was absolutely impossible to resist going again. So much easier is it to conquer a first temptation than a second. Ned Cozens did not, as he appointed, attend the theatre this evening, but George thought nothing of his absence. He was equally well amused without him, and returning home, after the performance, hoped that his present gratification might pass off as well as the former.

"*But George was disappointed. On a*

home he found the shop-door on the
and the little errand-boy, instead of
y sleeping in his master's arm-chair,
ring on the floor, visibly overcome with
. Alarmed conscience at once for-
g the mischief that had happened,
ge instantly sought out the till, which
een emptied of the receipts of the day.
en proceeded to his father's little pri-
oom within the shop. The desk had
forced open. What was the amount of
y kept there by Mr. Adams, George
not, but it was gone; and the whole of
irrible disaster was owing to his want of
tion to withstand a silly temptation to
ement. The opprobrium of the rob-
night even fall upon him. The idea
so painful to bear; and although a mo-
s reflection would have represented
as a corroborative testimony against
George waited not for this moment's re-
m; but, actuated by a violent impulse,
diately quitted the house, and fled to as
a distance from it as his tired limbs
carry him.

“After some days’ wandering, the anguish of his mind, ~~was~~ ^{drove} him to the sea-coast, and ~~again~~ ^{at} yielded inclinations, he embarked merchantman just leaving the new to the business of the sea, ill from the change of element, he use on board; and on his entreaty ashore again, he was landed a hundred miles from the spot where taken in. He then began to travel along the country; but he was not fit for this trade, and he endeavored to work as a farmer’s servant. During the sowing and harvest seasons, and getting on in the summer, he made out very well; but during the winters, he suffered much from constant privations he was obliged to go. Yet he dragged on nearly in this precarious sort of existence, notwithstanding the mental uneasiness suffered, he continued hearty and fit of sickness at length overtook him, having no claim on the protection *was* passed on from parish to

to the company of a set of gipsies, who taken up their abode for the night, in the same covert into which he had crawled for the same purpose. They were then boiling a pot, which contained some very palatable soup; and as he was beginning to recover his appetite, the mess which was offered by the sunburnt hands of one of their girls, was grateful to his appetite, and he received it with thankfulness. He naturally drew towards their cheerful fire, and leaning himself by the side of Polly Hazel, the dispenser of his pottage was called,) his aching head at length fell on the ragged cushion which had been provided for her own use. Polly spread her own blanket over him; and from this moment the only beggar of the respectable Adams became the companion and ally of a set of noted vagabonds.

George, however, had been too well brought up to accommodate himself, with any degree of ease, to this mode of life; but the endearment of female affection, which had not been denied him since he lost sight of his

floating mother, and for which he had a time sighed during his unhappy wanderings, attached him to the band; and, in the course of a few months, the beautiful kind-hearted, but ignorant and uncultivated gipsy, became his wife. She had once been a father, and was likely to do so a second time, when a spirit of envious rivalry which had some time been growing amongst the gang, towards their association with the son, broke out. The reluctance with which he joined their pilfering parties, was the subject of frequent and heavy complaint; and his absolute refusal to be an accomplice in the robbery which was now meditated by the gang, drew upon him, upon his wife and his children, volumes of clamorous abuse and ridicule. The warmth of dispute was but momentarily checked by the appearance of strangers, when the gang passed the Gardiner family chalk-pit; and would, in all probability, have been resorted to with increasing ardour, had not the sudden illness of George's wife obliged them to stop under a hedge, and ultimately

closure which the kindness of Mrs. Port drew from the almost broken-young man."

Gardiner here stopped her relation, and said:

"Good, mamma, I will be very, very kind over myself, and endeavour to accomplish."

"I seem to have taken this relation to you, my dear boy," observed Mrs. Gardiner, "and I confess to you that I cannot think it practicable. Had George Adams known

that he had resisted temptation, he might have saved the five years of miserable suffering he has experienced: and what remains for him yet to undergo, God only knows."

During this long period he has never seen or heard of his parents: they may be dead, or, what is worse, suffering from indigence, occasioned by the imprudence of their son. Certainly their minds are in a wretched state of doubt and dis-

Will he not now endeavour to find them,

mamma?" inquired more than one time.

"Letters, both from himself and Montefort, have already been delivered," replied Mrs. Gardiner, "to the place he formerly resided; and in a few days I hope the poor young man may receive his. The plan, I am sure, will be of some service, calculated to lessen the wretchedness there seems to be on. But George's recital has taken up more time than I expected it would. I must now think of completing the arrangement I have formed of joining Mr. Adams in the field. Go, my loves, and get ready."

The interest excited in the young people for George Adams, had already made them almost forget the pleasure in store for them, and now that it was remembered, they were leaving John at home, considerably less than the alacrity with which they would have attended to this direction. They thought, however, that the well-digested plan of Mr. Adams, and the mother were not to be unsettled by *monstrances*; the bonnets and tips *accordingly* soon arranged, and

an affectionate kiss to John, they accompanied their mother to the cricket-field. It was a party that John would most thoroughly have enjoyed; for he delighted in society of boys of his own age, and there were many nice lads of twelve and thirteen amongst Mr. Jackson's pupils. Edward, though less anxious to mix with other boys, in his more reserved disposition, was not backward in feeling much pleasure and satisfaction, when an opportunity offered of joining their sports; and he very soon felt quite at ease amongst the strangers.

The Misses Travers had also been invited to join the party; and the curiosity of Isabel was gratified to the utmost, in her observation of these very odd-mannered girls. Forged, however, as she generally was, to make herself amiable and agreeable to strangers, she was actually made shy and reserved by Maria and Georgiana Travers. So striking the difference between the lively openness of disposition, which occasionally gave her the appearance of being almost too forward, and the practised impudence of address

which characterises the ill-mannered and the professed hoyden. Had the manner of the Misses Travers been less repulsive, perhaps Mrs. Gardiner might have been fearful of introducing them to her own volatile girl; but they were such as to content themselves, even in the eyes of Isabel Gardner; and although much amused by the childish rudeness of her new acquaintance, absolutely shrunk from finding herself near them.

With Fanny Travers, Charlotte was much pleased; and it was not difficult to discern, that the poor little girl felt particularly gratified at being drawn into notice. She seemed to have an absolute fear of her sisters; and when her father approached she pressed against Charlotte, whose arm she held with so much trepidation, that Mrs. Gardiner could not help observing her agitation.

"Do you ride on horseback, or not?" said Mrs. Gardiner to little Fanny, in order to draw her into conversation.

"O yes, Ma'am," replied Fanny.

a not very fond of it." Then, looking round if to see that she was not remarked by her sisters, she added: "I would rather, at any time, be walking quietly in the garden, but I am obliged to ride."

Mrs. Gardiner longed to say to Fanny, that she should be happy to see her, to walk with her own children: but she checked herself; for how could she make a distinction between Fanny and her other sisters? And the elder girls she should not have been at all pleased to see become companions of her own daughters. She was therefore satisfied with general expressions of kindness towards the little girl, for whom she was inclined to feel so much interest; and during the evening Fanny was constantly to be seen at the table either of Charlotte Gardiner or her mother.

It was nine o'clock before the party dispersed, and on returning to the chalk-pit, John was found hard at work on his cabinet; which had occupied his time, and made it pass off pleasantly during the few hours he

had spent alone. His sisters and brothers related to him the pleasant evening they had passed, intermixing many expressions of regret that he had not been of the party; and he informed them of a visit paid by Mrs. Langford, to invite them to see a brood of young partridges, hatched under a hen, from eggs which had been taken from a forsaken nest by the farmer's ploughman. There were nineteen of them, and Mary said there were such pretty little things.

"Did you not see them, then?" said Isabella hastily: "oh! I suppose you thought you must not," added she, lowering her voice.

"I did not know I might, so I thought had better not," replied John; and a kiss from his mother rewarded this little attention at resolution.

"Where it is doubtful whether a pleasure is lawful or not," observed Mrs. Gardiner, "we are on the right side not to indulge. A little perseverance in this particular, a boy of ten, will spare many and many an inconvenience, if not bitter regret, in the next of twenty."

It was now time to think of rest; and the whole household, having first been assembled together for their evening devotions, retired quietly to their apartments.



CHAPTER XIII.

REPROOF.

WHEN the business of the morning was over on the following day, Mrs. Gardiner proposed a walk to the farmer's, to see the young brood of partridges, and the proposal was readily acceded to. Mary was just setting off, with loaded baskets, to the next market-town, but observing the approach of her visitors, she placed her loads upon the bank, and ran to open the wicket.

"We will not hinder you, Mary," said Mrs. Gardiner: "we will walk down in the evening, when you return from market."

Mary, however, had by this time opened

the wicket, and insisted upon it that she should be in very good time, for she generally set off earlier than she need, that she might not be hurried on the road.

"A very good arrangement of yours," observed Mrs. Gardiner; "indeed, if you were not a good manager, you could not contrive so well as you do. But will the butter and eggs be safe, where you have left them?" added she, turning her eyes back.

"Oh, yes! nothing ever passes but from your house, Ma'am," replied Mary; and they passed on to the brood of partridges.

"What do you feed them with?" asked Mrs. Gardiner.

"We have a large basin-full of earth brought in every day, out of the field, Ma'am," replied Mary, "full of emmets, and this is what they like better than any thing. Indeed, it would be of no use to try to rear them, if we did not give them what they like; for then they would not thrive."

"They must be some trouble to you, I *should think*," replied Mrs. Gardiner.

Oh yes, a great deal," answered Mary

but it seemed a pity they should be lost for want of a little trouble; or else I don't expect they will pay much."

At this moment one of Mary's nieces approached. The child looked distressed, and, going up to her aunt, she said: "The eggs are all broke, aunt," and then burst into tears.

"Oh! don't mind about it," replied Mary, turning towards the wicket: "but how did happen?"

"Grandfather drove the cat out of the hen-house, and it scampered off through the hedge where the basket stood, and knocked them all down; and I am sure they are all broke, for they ran down the hill like many stones."

The whole party turned to see the extent of the mischief which had been done, and Edward was the first to take the little girl by the hand, to whom he had once been so unkind, and lead her to the spot where the shattered eggs strewed the ground.

"Never mind, Betsy," said Mary: "why, have plenty of eggs in store."

"Yes; but they were all my own hen," answered Betsy, so now I shall not be able to take Montefort all the summer."

The eggs were literally com-
liated; and poor Betsy's tears
fully over the scattered fragmen-
having first whispered to his m-
permission to do so, ran home,
returned with a couple of doze-
had been saving for a partici-
and offered them, in the kinde-
the little girl, instead of those s-
Betsy expressed her thanks
gentleman, but said it was her
wanted to send to Mrs. M-
Mrs. Gardiner's assuring her, l-
her attention would doubtless
received by Mrs. Montefort,
eggs were actually from her ow-
she consented to their being
basket which lay empty at the f-
and conveyed by her aunt to l-
a tribute of gratitude from hers-
A day or two after this, the

re all taken to the cottage, where a temporary lodging had been provided for George and his family, by Mrs. Montefort; and on returning home, Charlotte expressed a wish to be allowed to cut up some of her own old garments, to make clothes for the babies. Mrs. Gardiner highly approved of the proposal, when, accidentally turning her eyes towards John, she perceived a thread hanging from his coat-sleeve, and went towards him to remove it. Instead of yielding, however, to the touch she gave it, the jerk produced an increased untidiness of appearance; and on further examination, a wristband completely ragged was exposed. Mrs. Gardiner looked towards Charlotte, who blushed and hung her head. Nothing more passed upon the subject at present; but when they arrived at home, Charlotte was accompanied by her mother to her apartment, and desired to open her work-drawer. It was in complete confusion: there was not a single thing in its place. Wristbands half stitched, frills half ripped, and stockings half mended, presented themselves in dismal disorder on every

side: and what was finished and not begun, were so intermixed hand, that not one thing could be ed from another. Mrs. Gardiner only grave, but distressed, and burst into tears.

A few moments were passed in Mrs. Gardiner, after taking a letter pocket, she had that morning received from her husband, presented it to her for her perusal.

Charlotte took the letter. To see of it was, that the hopes Mr. Collins had been so sanguinely cherishing in the management of his affairs, had at length entirely disappointed; and he no longer able to bear the losses were even greater than he had expected. He expressed his desire that prompt measures of retraction had been immediately taken, and his satisfaction in the cheerfulness with which his wife presented that their children acquiesced in themselves to their change of position as it was absolutely necessary now look entirely to their own

dependence, it was a source of great comfort to know that they possessed both the inclination and ability to do this. The letter included in affectionate remembrances to every separate individual of the family, and in the expression of a hope, that on the return of Captain Montefort from China, Mr. Gardiner would be ready to accompany him to England.

Charlotte bedewed this letter with her tears, and returning it to the hand of her mother, expressed her sorrow for the careless neglect which appeared before her, with any promises of greater attention in future.

"I am sorry to occasion this distress in you, my dear girl," said Mrs. Gardiner, affectionately, "but it is absolutely necessary I should do so, if I would prevent these idle habits from gaining a preponderance likely to be most prejudicial to your future welfare ; as you have now seen, by your father's letter, there no longer remains a doubt of the necessity of your looking to your own exertions for your future maintenance. You have made your own election, that of gover-

ness in a private family; and in respect of accomplishment, there cannot be a doubt of your success. Although you have talents for music, your perfect acquaintance with modern languages, the beauty of your manners, and your readiness in every social engagement, must give you a great credit in the education of youth. The equanimity of your temper also will be a great advantage to you; but watch against those careless and untidy habits which are apt to prevail, which but too often ruin themselves, I honestly confess to you. For one, should not consider you as fit to be entrusted with the management of a young family. If under your direction I saw a child acquiring the most finished manner in painting, it would disgust me to see her drawers in confusion, or her stockings and rags; and although you may perhaps think it vain, and with justice, that the art of managing a wardrobe is more the province of a maid than a governess, yet your constant superintendence must naturally be attended to by *the person* so nearly attached to

comfort of the child. Besides, you may, one of these days, be the mother of a family yourself: if it should so happen that the medium of your own hands is not required to keep them neat in their appearance, your own example will go a great way in the habits of your servants; and how should you like to see them in rags, through your own careless neglect?"

During the time that Mrs. Gardiner was speaking, Charlotte was busying herself in endeavouring to restore something like order to her drawers, in which attempt her mother kindly assisted her.

"How many of John's shirts, I wonder, are in the state of that I remarked on to-day?" observed Mrs. Gardiner: "you have had the wristbands in your possession for a month, at least, and how many have been put on?"

"Only two pair, mamma, I believe," replied Charlotte; "and Isabel did them."

"Poor Isabel endeavours, by her neatness," observed Mrs. Montefort, "to make up for other deficiencies; but she cannot

accomplish all the work there is to be done. Newman, I am quite sure, has no time; he cannot afford to put it out; and what is to be done, if you cannot, for the sake of saving your brothers neat, in some measure conquer this reluctance to the employment of your needle?"

"I do not dislike work, mamma, I am sure," said Charlotte; "but I do not seem to find time for it."

"A good economist will find time for every thing necessary to be done, even if some favourite employment must pay the sacrifice," said Mrs. Gardiner. "The fault is, you waste a great deal of time, and the remainder is not sufficient for the variety of occupations you have to follow. If this is the case, however, I must retrench your occupations of amusement, and, by a little discipline, teach you to manage a treasure which, if allowed to slip from us, can never be recovered."

By this time, the work-drawer was set to rights, and Charlotte, impelled by a strong desire to please her mother, had taken it

ble, and begun working on a pair of bands. Mrs. Gardiner, whose fingers were never idle, took another pair, and they continued working together, till the door suddenly opening, Isabel made her appearance, panting beneath the weight of a box could with difficulty carry.

"What have you there, my Isabel?" said Mrs. Gardiner, turning towards her little

"Something very heavy, mamma," said Isabel, as she placed it, almost out of breath, on the floor; "but I do not know what. It is for Charlotte, though; and James says it came from Miss Travers."

"From Miss Travers! What can it be?" said Charlotte, in a tone of surprise, and looking, as she raised her eyes from her work.

"The direction is, *For Miss Gardiner, from Miss F. Travers*," said Mrs. Gardiner; "but I cannot have it opened at present: I have not the time, I am sure, to spare, if I wish to see John look less shabby to-day than he did yesterday."

Charlotte felt that the delay was no than she deserved, and expressed no to repeal her mother's interdiction on opening of the box: she only observed she dared say it was some minerals; for Fanny asked her particularly if she adu them. She then continued her stitching

But Isabel's curiosity was not so e pacified; and partly actuated by this, partly by a wish of assisting her sister, offered the use of her needle, to finish shirt required on that day for John's use

"You may take mine, Isabel, if please," said Mrs. Gardiner; "for I mised to see poor Mrs. Carter this mon and hers is a case of distress I cannot appoint. With her large family, and declining husband, she requires all the assistance we can give her; but I fear, 4 lotte, there is little chance of your h the gratification of working for them soon."

This remark spoke very home to Charlotte's feelings: benevolence was e the leading features in her character

could not receive a greater mortification
 than disappointment in her little plans of
 charity. Much the larger part of her small
 allowance of pocket-money was spent amongst
 her poor neighbours, and none upon her
 own personal gratification. Amiable, how-
 ever, as was this disposition, there was a great
 deal of its being overshadowed, if not en-
 tirely eclipsed, by the indolence which was
 Charlotte's greatest fault; and in all proba-
 bility, had the continuance of wealth allowed
 her the free indulgence of her schemes of
 beneficence, without exactions on her own
 activity, her feelings in this respect, as in
 many others, might have degenerated into
 morbid sensibility, and selfish sentiment
 would have usurped the place of lively and
 active benevolence. The case was not such
 at present. Charlotte must either entirely
 give up the pleasure of assisting her poorer
 neighbours, or she must owe the possibility
 of doing so to her own constant exertions.
 It was not by neglecting other duties that
 this was to be done; that would in itself be
 a strong dereliction of duty; but it must be

by so managing them, and economising the time employed in them, that enough might be found for every thing: in fact, it must be by one means, and by no other; and this was, by shaking off that overpowering indolence, which shrunk from every thing but unnecessary employment, and which stole away many a quarter of an hour in anticipatory reflection, that might have accomplished the prescribed occupation.

The observations of Mrs. Gardiner opened the avenue to all this chain of reflection in the mind of the sensible Charlotte; and her own good sense seconded the representations of her mother, and dictated the line of conduct to pursue. She keenly felt the vexation she had brought on herself, by her incapacity to execute her promise towards the little gipsy baby; and she also felt, that a finding which could draw so deep a sigh of distress from her mother, must be of a most alarming tendency. Notwithstanding all the temptations of Isabel, she could not direct her sister's attention either from her work,

the train of thought which was now forming a plan for a thorough reform in the management of her time: she did not quit her seat till both the wristbands were fitted to John's shirt, when, dispatching Isabel to her brother's apartment with the finished document, she sought for her writing-desk, prepared a small book for the entrance of her hourly employments. It commenced with a resolution to subdue an inertness which was prejudicial both to mind and body; and included every hour, from seven in the morning, the time of morning prayers, till nine in the evening, when the little family were again assembled together for the purposes of devotion.

Mrs. Gardiner returned, as Charlotte completed the formation of her diary, and having informed of its design, most highly approved it; and tenderly embracing her child, told her she expected every thing from the affectionate and benevolent feelings of her aunt. She then proposed the opening of Miss Travers's box; and the proposal was

scarcely made, when Isabel flew to her room, to obtain the necessary implement for lifting the lid.



CHAPTER XIV.

RESOLUTION.

THE box contained some very beautiful specimens of minerals; and Mrs. Garth was much pleased with an attention, coming from Fanny Travers, which evinced that she was of any kindness shown to her. It was evident she was not in the habit of receiving a great deal at home, and the emotion occasioned a tear of sympathy in the sensitive Charlotte.

“How differently we are situated,” she said, imprinting a kiss of gratitude on the *cheek* of her mother; “and how

sible we could have poor Fanny
ly amongst us, to dissipate a little
lancholy which seems to oppress
ch."

k with you, my love," replied Mrs.
tenderly returning her daughter's
at Fanny Travers is not very hap-
f we should now and then meet
ugh I should be inclined to have
ention shown her, I must caution
my dear girls, against making any
on the subject to her. Whatever
he inconveniences she suffers, if
proper feeling in respect to them,
not bear to have those immediate-
ted with her, become subjects of
sion to others; and I should be
to induce her to any disclosures,
ent of excited feeling, which might
; prove subjects of regret. The
parents should be slowly, and with
ce, observed by children; and if
l, should be sacredly kept secret,
usly guarded from the eye of ob-

“Where shall we place all these beautiful things?” said Isabel, a little tired conversation which was inclined to be too serious for her. “Oh, here come ward: look, Edward, what beautiful thi

“They are very beautiful, indeed,” Edward; and looking them over, to he was able to give names; for he had perused, for the third time, the book Mrs. Montefort had lent him, without beginning to enter a little into a knowledge of their forms of crystallization.

In a few minutes they were joined by John, without his jacket, and looking as if he had been toiling like a labourer. He whispered to Edward, who accompanied him out of the room; and presently returned together with the cabinet, which was now completed, all but the glazing of the doors. These were to have been made of glass, but for glass-doors would have been an expense beyond the purses of the young people; but Mrs. Montefort, having seen John in the progress of his work, had volunteered a pair of glazed doors.

. Gardiner had consented to their receiving this little present from their friend. as possible, however, without the doors, arrange the large contribution just received; and the minerals were scarcely detected in their new habitation, and the new dresses of the young people changed when their early dinner was ready.

Charlotte Gardiner kept the resolution had made of being scrupulously attentive in the management of her time; and at the end of the first week, she had arranged every thing so well, that, besides the accomplishment of the set of shirts which required new wristbands, she had completed a little gowns and petticoats for Mrs. Rams's baby. There was but one thing which, to attain this, she had been obliged to neglect; and this perhaps was one of the greatest sacrifices she could have made. It had been before remarked, that Charlotte's taste for painting was very decided: she had been lately employed on a series of pictures, wrought by her into beautiful little pictures, from some very rough sketches,

brought by Captain Montefort from : and she had always intended them presented to Mrs. Montefort, on her wedding-day. That day was now arrived the views were still incomplete. It required a great deal of resolution not to : upon them for the last week; but Charlotte was sensible that, in the course of succeeding weeks, they might have been completed, and she was courageously : in not yielding to her earnest desire in having them in a state to be presented to her beloved Mrs. Montefort, on her wedding-day.

"Well, I have finished the purchase of the exulting Isabel, as she cut off a thread of an elegant bead-purse, she has been working very hard on ever since six o'clock in the morning: "do you not think it very pretty?" added she, holding it up to her sister, and expecting the first gratification of her vanity in Charlotte's opinion.

"Yes, I think it beautiful," said Charlotte; "and how quickly you have done it: why, you only began it :"

"Morning, and I am sure I did not think it possible you could finish it to-day."

"Well, that is the advantage of nimble fingers," said Isabel, with a little sneer, which almost said, "Nimble fingers are worth all your plodding." She then thoughtlessly added: "Now, do not you wish your drawings were finished? I believe you depended a little upon my backwardness, did not you? or you might have been tempted from your little gowns."

"I hope I should not," said Charlotte, with a placid smile; "and I hope you do not think I could be ill-natured enough to feel any pleasure in the idea of your not having finished your present for Mrs. Montefort, because I had not finished mine. No, indeed, my dear Isabel, if I must be a sufferer from my own want of diligence, it would be no consolation at all to me to have you for my companion."

"No, you are always too good-natured," replied Isabel; "too full, indeed, of vanity, but otherwise never deficient in affection; and

I have a great mind now not to give the purse to-day, as you are not ready."

"Indeed I beg you would," replied Charlotte; and Mrs. Gardiner at this time opening the door of the apartment, Isabel stepped towards her, and dangling the purse in her fingers, exultingly exhibited it to her mother.

"It is finished, mamma," said the vain little girl, "notwithstanding I only began yesterday morning; and you said I could not do it properly in less than a week, you were sure."

"But are you sure you have done it properly?" said Mrs. Gardiner, incredulously.

Such a thought as this had not suggested itself to the self-satisfied Isabel, and she looked half-offended, although the inquiry came from her mother.

Mrs. Gardiner took the purse in her hand and gently drawing the strings, to open several of the ill-fastened threads gave way, and a shower of little beads fell on the floor.

Poor Isabel looked dismayed, and

grily at her mother, as if she had been the use of the disaster. .

"I did but just touch the strings," said Mrs. Gardiner, quietly, and offering the purse to her little girl: "there must be something wrong in it, and you had better endeavour to stop further mischief." Isabel received the purse again, though somewhat ungraciously, and her little delicate fingers made an attempt to arrest the falling beads; but almost every fastening had given way, and in the course of a minute, as she vainly endeavoured to restore order, nearly half the purse was undone. Vexed and mortified, she threw the purse on the floor, and burst into a passionate flood of tears.

Charlotte picked up the purse, and was beginning to perform the office of a comter.

"No, my dear Charlotte," said Mrs. Gardiner, drawing her away from Isabel: "we have all of us faults to contend with, and if it would be comfortable amongst ourselves, it is absolutely necessary they should be

subdued. Isabel's disaster is entirely occasioned by herself; and although attended with disappointment, it will not, I hope, without its advantages. She will now that when I tell her, quickness is not always of use without exactness, I am not telling her otherwise than the truth; and she will discover that, when a little girl is kindly minded of what she wishes to perform, not becoming in her to slight the hint, she entirely depend on her own boasted vigour, however late resorted to. It is in haste in which this purse has been put together, which has made it so shabby a performance; and Isabel might have congratulated herself on the discovery being made before it was presented to Mrs. Montague instead of bestowing a look of unkind pleasure on a mother who is anxious to spare her every mortification in her power."

Poor Isabel was completely subdued: she threw her arms round her mother's neck and sobbed out words of penitence, which could not be distinguished. They obt

the easy forgiveness of Mrs. Gardiner, and Isabel promised, in future, to depend more on the advice of others than on her own natural quickness.

"And now," said Mrs. Gardiner, "I have a little scheme of pleasure to impart, in which I think you will all be glad to participate. I have this morning received a note from Mrs. Montefort, inviting us to join her in a ramble through the woods. She has frequently talked of giving you a treat of this sort, and as it promises to be fine to-day, she has ordered her servants to prepare the refreshments necessary for the excursion."

This delightful scheme was directly imparted by Isabel to her brothers, and the bustle of preparation was soon evident throughout the young party.

CHAPTER XV.

A RAMBLE.

ONE half of the pleasure arising from bling excursions, frequently consists in novelty of taking every thing as it comes, and for a while dispensing with the forms and ceremonies of cultivated Children enjoy the liberty thus unspoiled allowed them for a few hours, and the resemblance is preserved to their usual and customs, the greater is their sense joyment. Perfectly aware of this position in the taste of her young friend anxious to give them a complete day of indulgence, Mrs. Montefort gave orders to have a cart well supplied with provisions prepared to attend them, consisting of meat and pastry. Fuel was not to be forgotten; and those who wished for the luxuries of vegetables, were to assist in dressing *when the party should halt under*

spreading tree to dine. Tea-cups and saucers were also provided, and the kettle was to be boiled in true gipsy style, over a fire-place of crooked sticks. Two or three donkeys were hired, to allow a little occasional rest to any tired pedestrians; and the whole cavalcade was to be attended by a man-servant and a maid, to whom Mrs. Montefort wished to give a treat.

As Mrs. Gardiner and our young friends proceeded to Fleetwood, they stopped at the cottage where the Adams's had been provided with a temporary lodging, and Charlotte had the satisfaction of presenting to the pretty gipsy the two little gowns she had been making for her baby. Mrs. Gardiner compassionately inquired how they were going on, and George told her, with tears in his eyes, that he had received a letter from the clergyman where he had formerly resided, and that his father had been dead nearly two years; that previously to this his business had gradually been declining, and that although in the conviction of Ned Cozens, for

the fatal robbery of the desk, his own influence in that particular had been evident, his father had never been able to recover his spirits, but had gradually sunk into a decline. Mrs. Adams was still living, but in very reduced circumstances, and in very indifferent health; and the news of her son being alive, seemed but very little to interest her, as it came too late to be of any comfort to her poor husband.

George seemed much inclined to despond; but Mrs. Gardiner urged him to keep up his spirits, for that a great inducement offered itself, in the hope of still being a comfort and assistance to the declining years of his mother.

The elevated spirits of the young people were somewhat lowered as they witnessed the distress of poor George; but Mrs. Gardiner was not sorry to observe the impression which the miseries attendant on an early indulgence of the passions had made on them.

"*Could George have submitted to those slight and wholesome restraints,*" said M

ardiner, as she left the cottage, "which
re represented to him as necessary in his
ty early years, he might now have been a
spectable and flourishing tradesman, sur-
rounded by all the friends whom birth and
bit had endeared to him from his infancy ;
d the comfort and delight of a father and
other, who would have been retiring from
siness in ease and independence."

"But then he would not have had so beau-
ul a wife, mamma, perhaps," said Isabel.

"I could wish, my Isabel," replied Mrs.
ardiner, "that you did not attach so high a
ice to beauty as you seem too frequently to
; for, allowing it its highest share of praise
d admiration, it can be of little use alone in
e arrangement of a poor man's cottage, or
little tradesman's family economy. The
ce of Mrs. Adams possesses the most beau-
ul symmetry of feature; her eyes, I think,
e the finest I ever saw; and with the whole
ere is a loveliness of good-humour which is
ry fascinating. But, with all this, we
ow *that* she has been brought up from her
ldhood in habits of theft, deceit, and can-

ning; in a species of insubordination, which she has been taught to respect neither law nor property: she can neither read nor write, and has no other idea of the duties of religion, than from the desultory attempts made by her husband to remove her ignorance during their vagrant wanderings. She certainly seems very much attached to her husband. Her children appear to awake in her the strongest feelings of affection, and the pains which no doubt Mrs. Montefort will take in her improvement, will, I hope, be attended with success. But I only meant to say, Isabel, that had George Adams now been in his father's shop, he might have met with a wife somewhat more suitable than the pretty brunette who is so great an object of interest with you."

"I wonder if Mrs. Adams used to tell fortunes, mamma?" said John.

"I dare say she did," replied Mrs. Gardner, "for hers is exactly the face and figure chosen for that sort of employment, by these vagrant crews."

I should like to have my fortune told, ju

in," observed Isabel; "and perhaps Adams may do it, when I know a little of her."

"You spoke then, Isabel," said Mrs. Gardiner, "as you very often do, without thought or moment's reflection, I think, would have yielded a remark, not only silly, but absurd."

"Wicked, mamma?" said John: "is it absurd to tell fortunes? I have often heard people say silly, but I did not know it to be absurd."

"Why do you call it silly, John?" said Mrs. Gardiner.

"Because I know there is no dependance on what they say, mamma."

"Then do not you think it wicked to engage persons to utter a string of falsehoods, which both you and they know to have no foundation whatever? But there are many ignorant, weak persons, who do believe in them; and their sin consists in imagining that it is possibly consistent with the Divine attributes, to allow a knowledge of future events to creatures of so low and abandoned a

stamp, as, unfortunately, very many of them are. It is the duty of those who are better informed, to undeceive the more credulous, and remember, Isabel, I shall consider you guilty of a very great offence, if you talk of this subject to Mrs. Adams, even only in fun."

Isabel promised attention, and was very sorry to have the conversation here changed by meeting Fanny Travers, who was also proceeding towards Fleetwood.

"Mrs. Montefort was so good as to invite us all to meet you, Madam," said Fanny to Mrs. Gardiner, as she gave her hand: "our sisters are engaged, but they have allowed me to come."

This word *allowed*, though unconsciously pronounced, conveyed with it an idea which made Mrs. Gardiner press the hand of her young friend as she dropped it. There was not a sufficient disparity of years between them, to make it sound at all pleasingly natural.

The next subject of rejoicing presented itself in the appearance of Mr. Jackson.

pils, two of whom approaching at this moment, and bowing to Mrs. Gardiner, took each an arm of Edward. They had no acquaintance with John, who had not been of the party at cricket; and as Mr. Jackson approached to pay his accustomed civilities to Mrs. Gardiner, John coloured deeply, and stepped behind his mother.

"Is that a son of yours, also, Madam?" said Mr. Jackson: "I was not aware you had two sons: I think I did not see that young gentleman the other evening."

Mrs. Gardiner in some measure participated in the confusion of her son: she drew him forward, however, and introduced him, when Mr. Jackson, visibly interested by his animated countenance, shook him by the hand, and asked him why he had not joined the cricket-party?"

John's heart beat, but he thoroughly understood the value of truth; and looking as steadfastly as he could in Mr. Jackson's face, while the deepening crimson made his eyes almost overflow with moisture, he replied.

"I had acted contrary to my mother's wish Sir, and did not deserve to go."

"Noble fellow!" replied Mr. Jackson taking his hand, and shaking it with a heaviness which made poor John totter: "I answer for you, by that honest confession, that you never transgress rules again."

A tear of pleasure glistened in Mrs. Gardiner's eye.

"I see he is a boy you may be proud of, Madam," said Mr. Jackson, also shaking Mrs. Gardiner's hand: "excuse the liberty, Madam," added he; "but I do honour the truth, as much as I despise a falsehood; and I teach all my pupils to honour it too."

He then took the happy John into the midst of the amiable group of lads who were training up under his judicious and well-ordered management; and in a few minutes John was as well acquainted with them as they had been some time known to each other.

The young people having all walked before, Mr. Jackson continued walking w

Mrs. Gardiner; in whom, as well as in her children, he seemed to take a lively interest.

"That is a quick lad of yours, I am sure," said Madam," he observed, as John left them.

"He is not deficient in intelligence," replied Mrs. Gardiner, "but he is one of the very idle ones, and not much attached to his books. Edward has the largest share of application, and puts John very frequently to the blush by his superior readiness."

"They seem both very nice lads," observed Mr. Jackson: "he then hesitated and paused, but presently resumed: "You will excuse a liberty I am going to take, my dear Madam: when one has numbered half a century of years, one is apt to be presumptuous. From the manners of these boys, it is easy to discover that the greatest care has been taken with their education. They have doubtless made some progress in the groundwork of the dead languages; and, I beg your pardon, Madam, but it seems to me a pity that these acquirements should have any check. Their residence here for the last six months——"

"I has not, I trust," interrupted Mrs. Gardiner, with a gratified smile, "at least occasioned them to lose the little store of information they had acquired. I have not allowed them to relax——"

"But boys of their age, if left to themselves, will relax," said Mr. Jackson.

"But they are never left to themselves Sir," replied Mrs. Gardiner: "every sort of application passes under my own eye, and no exercise or lesson is put by, till I have examined or heard it."

"I now understand you, Madam," replied Mr. Jackson, with hasty pleasure; "you are yourself their instructor. You have an understanding above the absurd prejudice which ignorance and vanity attach to a wish of improvement, in what is called the weak sex; and you have the good sense to keep yourself an acquisition which exposes you to the raillery of weak minds."

"You must not overrate me, my dear Sir," said Mrs. Gardiner; "my boys are but a few *classes* below me, I believe. They will *be on* an equality with their mother,

men, I dare say, will soon pass by her; for I have not now time, as I had once, by a little daily application, to keep constantly before them."

"I am ill-natured enough, almost, to be pleased at this declaration," said Mr. Jackson, "as it opens a possibility to my receiving a gratification which I have been endeavouring to promise myself. You say that our boys are making great approaches to you, and soon, probably, may leave you behind them: at any rate, the necessity of attending to them must make too great a division of time from your daughters. Why not then send them to me for a few hours in the course of every day? They will not at all interfere with my other arrangements, and shall have the same attention I give my other pupils. I hope you will not refuse me this favour; for that boy, John, has made so lively an impression on my fancy, that I quite long to nail him to attention at my elbow."

The kindness of this proposal affected Mrs. Gardiner, and for a few minutes she could not reply. Presently, however, she said:

“ Presuming that you know the circumstances under which my family have sought retirement, my dear Sir, I esteem that you have just made me, one of great consideration and kindness; but you must not think me proud or ungrateful if I have the right to decline it. In the first place, it is more than probable that the little advantages they have already made may be of no use to them, and certainly I should think it wrong to turn their thoughts exclusively to the acquisition of elegant literature. In the second place, I think it would be actual injustice towards them, to allow them to consociate with lads whose future views appear so completely opposed to their own. And in the last, though not least, I can never adopt any measures without the sanction and acquiescence of my husband, but his opinions I would much rather be guided by than my own.”

“ Well,” said Mr. Jackson, “ I was prepared to knock down and treat as no other arguments, but with your last I have used an irresistible weapon. I

with the conscience of a wife, but patiently for the return of Mr. Gar-

ough Mrs. Gardiner had thought it make the conclusion she had done, and to her sons, the offer of Mr. Jackson's delicacy with which it was made, the manner of its being withdrawn, all tended to stamp the value of his acquaintance and she willingly promised to accept an on he gave her to visit his sister at his age.

ance could have introduced you to a added Mr. Jackson. But this was a which interfered too keenly with his low of spirits. Mrs. Gardiner, to turn conversation into a new channel, spoke of anties of Fleetwood, in the park of they were now walking; and Mrs. Fort presently joined them, in the avending to the house.

cart and donkeys were all in preparation and the party of eager young people commenced their excursion of pleasure.

Their first course was to a gravel-pit, a mile and a half distant, where a variety of fossil-shells were sometimes found, and they amused themselves without satiety a couple of hours. The whole party equally diligent in the research, and the hours were rewarded by a very pretentious cabinet collection. No one was unsuccessful, and Charlotte had the pleasure of storing into a basket a separate collection from every individual of the party. From thence they proceeded to a sand-pit where they were directed to search for a stratum of oyster-shells; but before operations were begun there, a general feeling of hunger prevailed, and it was proposed to take dinner in a beautiful recess, shaded by hanging clusters of clymatis and red-limb maple. It was a merry and a happy repast, and exercise and the open air quickened the appetites of all, and some tolerable encomiums were made on the large supply of provisions the baskets contained for the party. The young party soon resumed their

ical labours, and one of the emptied provision-baskets was soon filled with oyster-shells, dug out of the earth, at a distance of between twenty and thirty miles from the sea.

Consultation was now held as to the next object of pursuit, by the elders of the party ; and the young people having a great desire to pass a little time in nutting, it was determined, for that purpose, to enter the woods they were near, and then, taking their tea in some cool retreat, to return gently homewards, so as all to get safely housed before the approach of twilight. It was all excellently well arranged ; but as it is not in the power of mortals to execute as well as to plan, a little interruption towards the end of the evening occurred, which the elder ones would as willingly have dispensed with, however the prospect of returning with wet jackets might carry with it the idea of fun to the younger ones.

The pleasure of lighting a fire with dried leaves and dead wood, which had not been indulged in at dinner, was thoroughly enjoy-

ed at tea. Water was brought from a neighbouring stream by some of the lads, and a boiling tea-kettle soon sent up curling volumes of steam. The tea and bread and butter were most sweet, and the party were in the act of partaking of the delicacies on the grassy board, when a sudden flash of lightning made them all start, and a crash of thunder immediately following, increased the general alarm. The rain began to patter amongst the leaves, and there seemed to be every prospect of a hard shower.

"You would have time to take shelter at the Hunter's cottage, Madam," said Mrs. Montefort's servant.

"I think we had better do so," observed Mrs. Montefort.

"I am inclined to think there is no time to lose," said Mr. Jackson; and taking up Charlotte Gardiner and Fanny Travers under his arms, he proceeded thither himself, encouraging the rest to follow as quickly as possible.

The whole party had scarcely found shelter under the gamekeeper's cottage, when the rain poured down in torrents.

the young people were not a little amused by the crowded manner in which they were obliged to take advantage of Mr. Hunter's table reception. The family, however, was not one of the poorest: they had their parlour as well as their kitchen, but as the kitchen was generally only used on Sundays, the parlour were window-shutters to be opened, the chairs to be dusted, before it was pronounced fit for them to enter. A little of Mr. Hunter's bustling, however, soon accomplished the requisite preparations, and the comfort of the party was much increased by the additional space.

"I thought Susan lived at Mr. Phillips's," said Mrs. Hunter, "said Mrs. Montefort: how long has she left her service?" "Oh! she never will keep a place long, I am to be afraid, Ma'am," replied Mrs. Montefort, in a tone of voice which signified she was very near crying: "you know, Ma'am, when she first came, she was settled when farmer Montefort took her, and she staid there better half a year; and I did hope, now she has got to 'squire Phillips's, she certainly

would stop; for their servants always stay long time with them."

"I am afraid then it is Susan's own fault that she is come away," said Mrs. Monte-

"Yes, and I am afraid it is too, Ma'am," replied Mrs. Hunter: "it is her careless and untidiness, you see, Ma'am, that does it, and how she's ever to be cured of it, I don't know, I'm sure. She is a very good girl, and a very hard-working girl; and so was her father, Dickson, and his wife too. When they put her away, they said they dare say she would do very well where she was overlooked. So I hoped, when she came under that nice housekeeper at the 'squire's, it would be the making of her. Mrs. Monte took a very great fancy to her, and she has been her, and used often to make excuses for her when the 'squire's lady complained the series were not kept in good order. At last Madam Phillips said she could put up with it no longer; for it was not only uncomfortable for the children, but it would teach them bad habits. So we have got Susan back *our hands* again, and a pretty difference

to find; for if she always must be
g home, she must work when she is

I sha'n't mind so much if a little
l does her good, and if we don't get
upon our hands too; but there's the
fault in him, and he is not cured, though
s lived now going on for two years with
Charles Campbell; and one would have
ht any body would have learnt to be
under his coachman Richard. I am
l Richard is almost tired of him: he
o me the other day, It did not answer
m to have to sweep up the stable after
room. And whenever I see Jack, I am
s afraid his first words will be that he
ad his warning."

This is a very sad account of yours, in-

Mrs. Hunter," said Mrs. Montefort, as
as an opportunity offered itself: "but
not at all surprised at your children not
ng their places, if they cannot learn to
regular and neat in their work. I am
I would not keep one that was not so;
'they are ever so active and diligent, it

is of no use if their irregularity put
thing into confusion."

As Mrs. Montefort made this observation, poor Susan, who was a very good-looking girl, entered with a bowl of milk, which her mother had ordered to be brought from the dairy. Susan could not help but hear the remark, and probably intended to shake her nerves, and to spill the milk upon the floor, as she entered the room: it was the careless manner, in which she had put the milk bowl from the pan, that occasioned the ring upon the bright mahogany table placed it before Mrs. Montefort. On seeing the accident, instead of letting it pass, she could fetch a plate, she shifted it to another part, where another ring was lately made; and catching up her apron, she wiped it roughly over the table, and hid her cloud wherever it had touched. Mrs. Montefort was ready to cry, and poor Susan hid all the haste she could out of the room, to hide the vexation which was bursting from her eyes. Mrs. Gardiner could

king at her daughter Charlotte; but instantly perceiving, by her countenance, that she had already appropriated the lesson of uselessness, which had been exhibited in the gamekeeper's daughter, she quickly withdrew her eyes, with a pleasing anticipation that Charlotte had not commenced a reform, which she was not determined to complete.

The shower was very violent, but not long; and by the time the party had refreshed themselves with a cup of new milk and some beautiful grapes, hospitably pressed on them by Mrs. Hunter, instead of the sun, which the rain had interrupted, the sun again made its appearance, and the birds recommenced their evening songs of gladness.

The baskets with the provisions, and indeed every thing else, had been conveyed to the gamekeeper's: there was remaining yet of a very fine ham, a whole fowl, and nearly the whole of a veal-pie, besides some fruit-tarts and cakes. Mrs. Montefort observed to Mrs. Hunter, that it would save

her servants the trouble of taking her back to Fleetwood, if she would be placed in her pantry; and Susan did not seem at all displeased with the arrangement. Before leaving, Mrs. Montefort took Susan and conversed with her on the subject of her lost service: it seemed a real pity to the poor girl; and Mrs. Montefort said if she would endeavour to correct her untidy habits, she would make an attempt to get her reinstated in Mrs. Phillips' service. Poor Susan now shed tears of joy. Montefort told her not to raise her expectations too highly, but to use all her exertions towards acquiring neat and tidy habits; and in the course of time something might be done for her.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN AGREEABLE VISITOR.

At the return of Mrs. Gardiner to the alk-pit, an agreeable surprise was prepared for herself and her children, in the arrival of their uncle, an old gentleman of seventy-four, and the first relation, either on Mr. or Mrs. Gardiner's side, who had hitherto found them out in their retreat. Mr. Gardiner had several sisters, all well married, and with large families; but none of them had shown any sufficiently strong interest in his family, to submit, in a visit to the alk-pit, to all those little deprivations their more prosperous circumstances had, for many years, made them strangers to. Mrs. Gardiner herself had very few relations; scarcely besides the uncle now about to be introduced to our young readers. He was her father's brother, and had been through life a merry and joyous sea-officer. Infirmities

however, were now creeping on him and he had little remains of attachment but in the welfare and happiness of his and her young family. What he had suffered on their account, when he had heard of Mr. Gardiner's losses, had thrown him almost into a state of despondency; he had but lately made up his mind to the idea of seeing them. As soon as it was done, however, he determined on his journey to their residence; and he had travelled about five minutes, when the gratifying sounds of, "Uncle Harley Harley!" met his ears, and he was propped almost tottering under the caresses of his eager nieces and nephews.

"How long is it since you have seen us, uncle?" "Uncle, how long have you been here?" "We are so glad to see you, uncle." "Why did not you come sooner?" and a variety of other questions and exclamations were uttered, without waiting for an answer or a reply. The sadness which had been weighing down the spirits of the *gentleman*, for the last six months,

pared; every loss, every misfortune
gotten; and as uncle Harley return-
caresses of the young people, and
all their cheeks with tears of joyful
, he wondered why his moody dis-
had so long debarred him such a
e.

“where is your mother? your dear,
other?” said Captain Harley, as soon
ould at all disengage himself from the
n.

“dear, my beloved Isabel!” continued
he broke from the children, and
towards Mrs. Gardiner, who stood
; though far from uninterested spec-
of the scene passing before her.
“are you, my dear child?” continued
embracing Mrs. Gardiner with tender-
“how are you going on? how are you

“thank God, Sir,” replied Mrs. Gar-
as soon as her emotion would allow
speak, “we are all well, all perfectly
and if we had but papa amongst us

think should all be perfectly happy. In his absence, we cannot but feel the something of comfort missing; but we shall please God to return him again to us, we shall all, I think, have very else to ask for."

"Happy, happy disposition!" said Harley again kissing his niece; "and I happy children!" added he, again pressing them all to his bosom, "to possess mother. And here have I been a time fancying you must be very dull very miserable, and I could not bear you otherwise than happy; but I was a foolish old man."

The children were beginning to leave the uncle to see some of the beauties of the situation, but Mrs. Gardiner reminded him that he had not taken tea, perhaps.

"No tea, dearest Isabel," replied Harley: "a little bit of cold chop, nothing you may happen to have. But how the children are grown, and how I was not to come down before."

They all now entered the cottage

It be called the cottage of comfort; and ere, in a few minutes, the old captain, over chop, which Mrs. Gardiner took care should be hot and not cold, and a glass of that home-brewed beer, felt himself grow every moment younger.

And you are all going on well," conceded the old gentleman, looking round upon the group, which had all assembled round him, and fixed their joyful eyes upon him, ready to receive the looks of affection he constantly dispensing.

And how goes on the tweedle-dum, my dear Bella?" said Captain Harley, patting his youngest niece upon the back.

Isabel looked at her mamma.

"That is what we lose no ground in," replied Mrs. Gardiner, "by our change of circumstances; and I have reason to rejoice that I never neglected the advantages I have myself always had in that branch of ornamental education. I have every reason to be satisfied with Isabel's assiduity; and as we now consider it the means, perhaps, from which she will derive her subsistence, we

have increased our practising-time, and hope you will find her greatly improved.

"Well, and my boy, John," continued captain; "what is he ever likely to do for his bread? I believe we must make a use of him, for that's the only way in which he could be of any use to him. I might help to launch out there, amongst some of our old messmates. Should you like to go to the top-mast, boy?" and with the question he patted the head of the little fellow who had always been his favourite amongst his beloved group.

John hesitated, and looked at his mother.

"Answer your uncle, my boy," said Mr. Gardiner.

It was not a doubt with John, whether he should speak the truth, but whether he should speak at all, when he was conscious that his answer might displease his uncle. He answered the question, however, by replying, "No, he did not think he should like to go to sea."

"Not like to go to sea?" exclaimed Mr. Gardiner, with incredulous astonishment.

lenly removing his hand from John's
l: "why, I cannot help you, child, in
other way; for I never had management
gh to save any prize-money, and God
vs my father gave me but little. Not go
a! Why, I remember I jumped for joy,
n I was told I was to go to sea; and I
r should have dreamt it could be pos-
not to like it in preference to every
g else."

ohn was fearful he had offended his un-
and Mrs. Gardiner thought she saw dis-
sure in his countenance.

We may occasionally make the destina-
of the boys a subject of speculation,"
observed; "but it is impossible to
fine, with any degree of certainty, what
be the event. It is not at present, as it
to be, a matter of choice; and circum-
ces alone can decide, where natural taste
disposition used to be promised a choice.
and Edward are both very good boys,
whatever plan it is thought best they
ld adopt, I have not a doubt they will

cheerfully accede to, though contrary to what they would themselves have chosen."

The lips of John and Edward here at last met, in grateful affection, on the cheek of Mrs. Gardiner; and the little symptom of moodiness having disappeared from the face of the old gentleman, the conversation again resumed with cheerfulness, till Mr. Gardiner thought it was past the hour for her uncle's retiring. His bed, the preparation for which had occasioned a little alteration in the sleeping arrangements, was this time ready, and he was not sorry to find the quiet rest it offered him.

"Have you any thing of a stable where?" said Captain Harley, the next morning, to the young people, as he walked about the chalk-pit with them, before breakfast.

"No, we have no stable, uncle," replied more than one voice; "but we do not want one, for we have no horse, you know."

"But should not you like one?" rejoined their uncle: "you, John, are old enough to learn to ride now; and I came over to

downs, where you could scud along
sly, with an easy breeze."

"But we do very well without," said John:
"Mamma does without a great many, many
things, that I know she would like, though
she does not say so, so why should not we?"

"Well, now suppose you could have a
new one given you," continued their uncle.

"Then there would be the additional ex-
pense of keeping it," observed Charlotte.

"Yes; and James has so much to do, he
never could find time to take care of it."

"Well, I don't know," said Isabel; "I
think it could live upon the grass in the
milk-pit."

"And perhaps James might find time to
know he would if he could," said John,
"to take care of it."

"It need not be groomed up very smart,"
said Charlotte.

"Why, I think I could groom it myself,"
said John.

"But I should think you would not," ob-
served Edward, while symptoms of indig-
nit pride began to tinge his cheek.

"What, you are still *the little gentlen* are you?" said Captain Harley, turning sharply towards Edward: "I tell you you shall be then; you shall be a *gentlem gentleman.*"

Edward bit his lip, but he could not refrain from bursting into tears.

"I do not mean to be proud, uncle deed," said he, squeezing his hands those of his uncle; "and I shall not be grooming the horse, when we have got to groom."

Edward's sisters and brother hastened to dispel the uneasiness this subject had occasioned, and the concluding clause in his speech made them and himself too all late

"When you have got one to groom," Captain Harley, taking his nephew's hand, said "very well: now, if you think we have time before breakfast, to walk to the Green Dragon in the next village, we will go to see what we can find."

"What's o'clock? what's o'clock?" murmured amongst the young people
 "what's o'clock, James?" said they

ant, who passed at this moment with his of milk from the cow.

Just past seven, Sir," replied James.

And what time do you breakfast?"

At eight, uncle."

May you go without asking mamma?"

We had better not," replied Charlotte.

abel skipped off into the house, and kly returning with good news, the young y were very soon in sight of the Green gon, and soon after introduced to one of prettiest little white ponies ever broke Captain Harley had ordered it to be thither, where it now appeared fully risoned; and John, for whom it was icularly designed, was immediately as ed by the ostler to mount. The little al was so gentle that it required no agement; the delight of the young par- as complete; and John's sole uneasiness , that but one could ride at a time. He Edward, however, might ride alternate- but how could the same pleasure be se- ed to his sisters? and self-gratification

alone was a feeling under which Joh could be easy. This want, however, had been anticipated. Uncle Harley had a very nice side-saddle also to be sent for this kind attention to his sisters. Thanks were redoubled.

The party now returned to the ch the new present was exhibited to Mr. Liner, who could not fail of admiring the beautiful little steed, and but one day presented itself in its acceptance. was it to find shelter at night? raised this difficulty, however, she said it, by saying she had no doubt but that Langford would afford them a temporary accommodation; and it was immediately proposed to send James with a messenger to the farmer.

"And James will be glad of the mission, I dare say," said Captain "if it is to the farm-house at the end of the chalk-pit; for he seemed very welcome, both to the farmer and his daughter, as I saw them all chat

r by the stile, when I came by last
."

"Oh, James very often goes down to chat
Mary Langford, I know," said Isabel.

"And I heard farmer Langford say to
one day," said John, "whenever you
two or three minutes to spare, James,
shall always be glad to see you; and
coloured, and did not say any thing."

Ms. Gardiner smiled at these corroborated
testimonies to a courtship, which she
herself some time suspected; but James's
being now heard in the passage, she
ad the children to be silent on the subject.
And James now entering, he was dis-
ed to the farm. This was a time at
t, however, neither he nor Mary had
to chat upon the stile; and in the course
few minutes he returned, with a hearty
me for the white pony, from the honest
good-natured farmer.

Before the pony had been taken to his
place of shelter, where he was to re-
till his services should be required by
his master, Mrs. Montefort entered.

"Ah, my dear madam," said Captain Harley, rising as fast as old age would permit him, and holding out both hands, as he approached: "I should soon have found you out, in spite of the high hill the young people have been telling me I must climb the approach to your house."

"I hope you will find it as pleasant as they do, Sir," said Mrs. Montefort, as the old sailor shook her hand with violence. "I did not know you were here; had I done so, I should have been here, perhaps, sooner."

"Did you see the white pony?" said Captain Harley, half-whispering to Mrs. Montefort.

"Yes: did your uncle come on that beautiful little animal?" said Mrs. Montefort.

"Oh, no," replied Isabel; "but I don't know whose the pony is."

"Not yours?" inquired Mrs. Montefort.

"No, you know," replied Isabel, "it is not uncle Harley's favourite; but it is the same, it is John's, and we shall see it sometimes."

"Well, Sir," said Mrs. Montefort

to Captain Harley, "and how do we all? Do you not think we have a snug retreat?" And as she spoke, looked round affectionately on the whole

am delighted with all I have yet seen," said Captain Harley; "and not the least, the sight of Mrs. Montefort, in a barge, with which I am always glad to have her sailing in company."

"I wanted them all to come into my cabin," replied Mrs. Montefort, knowing she would delight the old sailor by marine allusion; "but I could not get them on board, so I left them to take their own way; but you see we have fallen in together at last."

"and always will fall in together, please," said Captain Harley. "And now, my lady, let me ask after all your good friends; and first, your own commander, did you hear from him?"

"I must not hope to do that, till I hear from him," answered Mrs. Montefort; "but

once returned, I assure you
to old England, for there
not suit me at all."

"Well, and where are
tions, my dear Madam?"
tain: "I wonder you don't
down, to keep you company."

"They are, some of them
ing me," replied Mrs. Montefort,
though we are a large family,
single ones remaining among
I cannot expect a constant
among them."

The young people, when
offered, requested that Mrs. Travers
again come and admire John.
they all sauntered towards the
he was tied, Mrs. Montefort
Gardiner of the reason of her
She had just heard of the
which Mr. Travers had been the
elopement of his two elder
the groom who had been the
tendant. Mr. Travers himself
pursuit of the fugitives, and

which her present residence have stood; while Mrs. Gardiner, understanding the feelings she was sought, felt no awkwardness at being seen in circumstances so different from those she had formerly been used to. The call of Sir William and his family, who were very nearly related to her, was particularly pleasing to her. Her two daughters, and two young ladies, were accompanied by two little girls, twins of between five and six years of age. Besides being very agreeable children, their dispositions appeared to be good; and they were so delighted with the young people in the chalk-pit, that they were very reluctantly called away when Mr. and Lady Elton took their leave of the party.

Elizabeth spent the few following days at her cottage, where she was hourly increasing her interest in the affections both of Mr. and of all the young people. Her temper was remarkably sweet and pleasant, and her fear of doing wrong gave her

CHAPTER XVI.

A NEW ARRANGEMENT.

THE next few days were spent very gaily at Fleetwood; but as there was a large and mixed society every day, Mrs. Gardiner could not be persuaded to break a rule she had positively laid down, to avoid ever thing like company during her husband's absence. She paid a morning visit, however, to those who, as being near and dear to Mr Montefort, could not but be objects of interest to herself; and they, in return, visited her in her simple but beautiful retreat. Both wealth and rank had showered their distinctions on the greater part of Mrs. Montefort's relations; but they were far from inflating them with pride or self-importance, and they had the same pleasure in improving their acquaintance with Mrs. Gardiner, in the small cottage in which she was now residing, as they had in forming it in the superb draw-

room in which her present residence
 had now have stood; while Mrs. Gardi-
 ner, perfectly understanding the feelings
 which she was sought, felt no awkward
 ignorance at being seen in circumstances
 different from those she had formerly been
 known in. The call of Sir William and
 Lady Elton, who were very nearly related to
 Mr. Montefort, was particularly pleasing to
 the young Gardiners; for they were accompa-
 nied by their two little girls, twins of between
 four and five years of age. Besides being
 very beautiful children, their dispositions ap-
 peared amiable; and they were so delighted
 with the young people in the chalk-pit, that
 they were very reluctantly called away when
 William and Lady Elton took their leave
 of Mrs. Gardiner.

Fanny Travers spent the few following
 days at the cottage, where she was hourly in-
 titiating herself into the affections both of
 Mr. Gardiner and of all the young people.
 Her temper was remarkably sweet and pla-
 cid; a constant fear of doing wrong gave her

endeavouring to persuade her to accompany Mrs. Fortescue to his parsonage, but the poor girl could not be prevailed on to accede; and notwithstanding the many vexations and mortifications to which she was subject from her own family, her disposition was much too good to find the slightest relief in their removal.

"Do, Miss Fanny," said Mrs. Harding, the respectable housekeeper to whom Fanny owed almost a maternal debt of gratitude, "do, Miss Fanny, try and be a little comfortable, and just walk down to the parsonage with Mrs. Fortescue. You may gather some of your wild flowers in the copse, you know, Miss Fanny love; and it will be on the right, when Mr. Jackson has taken the trouble to come up himself."

"Do not persuade her, good Mrs. Harding, if it distresses her so much," said Mr. Fortescue: "if it is more pleasant to her to remain where she is, let her do so."

Poor Fanny endeavoured to thank Mr. Fortescue for her kindness, but she could not speak articulately for her sobs.

Fanny had sufficiently recovered the agitation occasioned by this interesting news, to tie on her bonnet and tippet, the impatient Mr. Travers, accompanied or rather followed by Mrs. Harding, entered the cottage. He seized his daughter in his arms, and, overwhelming her with tears and caresses, exclaimed, that she was his only comfort in life, and that it was only for her sake he lived. Then turning to Mrs. Montefort and Mrs. Gardiner, with the same wild eagerness, he thanked them a thousand and a thousand times for all they had done for him, for his poor Fanny, for his only remaining hope; and he vehemently pressed the hands of both ladies to his lips.

Poor Fanny remained sobbing on the arm of her father, while Mrs. Gardiner endeavoured to prevail with him to calm his emotion, and to seat himself for a few minutes, till his daughter was ready to accompany him home.

“Home!” cried he, with alarm: “would you send her home again, my dear Madam, *to be ruined*, as my other poor children have

"They might have been nice girls, too, Ma'am," said Mrs. Harding, "if their papa had not took on so, and given them their complete way after the death of poor Mr. Travers. It was that that ruined them, as I hear, Ma'am. And now the poor gentleman reflects so upon himself about it, that I quite dread what will be the end of it; for he says he never will come back without them. And what is to become of poor dear Miss Fanny? who, to be sure, has such a sweet disposition."

Mrs. Montefort and Mrs. Fortescue both expressed their willingness to take charge of the poor little girl, till something should be heard of her father; and it was determined, after a little consultation, that Fleetwood was the place to which she should go, if she could be persuaded to do so. With the prospect of having Charlotte Gardiner for companion, this was accomplished with little difficulty; and when, in an hour or two afterwards, she became a little more composed, she accompanied Mrs. Montefort and Charlotte Gardiner thither.

Fanny's leading taste was a great fondness for flowers; and as it was almost the only pursuit, besides reading and writing, that she had been allowed to follow, she had made no despicable advances in the study. Mrs. Harding was a woman of acquirements far beyond her situation in life; and her fondness for Fanny Travers had led her, as far as English reading went, to cultivate her mind by the perusal of very many volumes in Mr. Travers's library, into which no other eye ever looked. Amongst the rest she had been induced to look into a work on botany, for the indulgence of little Fanny's curiosity in regard to the handfuls of flowers she used to bring to her, in order to learn the names. The child at length was not satisfied with receiving second-hand information, and gradually became an adept at discovering their names herself. The pursuit had attracted the ridicule both of her father and sisters; but she was allowed to follow it, and it had always procured her pleasure and satisfaction.

Wishing, in some degree, to divert the deep melancholy into which Fanny was con

stantly inclined to fall, Charlotte talked of flowers; and expressing herself to know something of their f Fanny was insensibly led to impart information she possessed on the and some days elapsing without rec intimation of Mr. Travers's return, t spent by Fanny entirely at F Charlotte herself at length became i in a pursuit she had at first taken the good-natured motive of amu friend. She spent a part of ever Fleetwood, and in this manner a v ped away. The visit of Captain H drawing to a conclusion, and the lit pony was just saddled to carry Edward alternately, as he walked wood, to take leave of his friend th Mrs. Montefort's groom arrived at tage.

"What can that be?" exclaimed running forwards to meet the man drawing something up the hill after

"It is a little car, such a beau

car!" added she, as she returned back to the rest of the party.

"And there are Mrs. Montefort, and Fanny, and Charlotte," observed John, who had also run on to take a peep.

The whole party, who were objects of curiosity, now drawing nearer, Mrs. Montefort explained, that the little car was a present from her to the young party in general: that, having understood from Captain Harley, that the little white pony was as clever in drawing as in carrying, she had had it built sufficiently light for his size; and that now, when John would lend his steed, they might all ride together."

"Oh! I will always lend my steed," said John, eagerly; "for I like to be all together."

Thanks for her kind attention were then by all bestowed upon Mrs. Montefort, and it was proposed that uncle Harley should be the first to try the new vehicle, and be transported in it to the inn, where he was to take the coach. The plan seemed generally approved of, and the old gentleman having af-

fectionately taken leave of his nieces nephews, and promised to pay them an visit shortly, was conveyed away in the car, in the midst of acclamations of which would have alarmed a less tra courser than that which had the hon drawing him. Even Fanny smiled ; b was not happy enough to join in the gr merriment, and seeking quietly the of Mrs. Gardiner's arm, she stood s watching the little cavalcade, which winding through the chalk-pit.

" Fanny seems to be silently asking : make up to her for my desertion to-day Mrs. Montefort to Mrs. Gardiner, smiling upon her young friend as she

" Do not say desertion, dearest Montefort," said the feeling girl, a seized her hand, and lifted it to he without withdrawing her other hand Mrs. Gardiner.

Both Mrs. Montefort and Mrs. Ga each pressed the hand of the interestin who felt so gratefully attached to them Mrs. Montefort, suppressing a tear

pathy, said: "I mean to leave Fanny with you to-day, if you will allow me to do so. I have this morning heard of a large party of sisters and brothers, who are coming to pass a day or two with me; and as they are all strangers to our young friend, I think it will be more pleasant to her to be amongst your young party. I conclude it will be no inconvenience, as Captain Harley has left you."

"Not the slightest," replied Mrs. Gardner; "we shall all be delighted to have her, and will do every thing we can to make her comfortable."

"You are both so kind," said Fanny, "that if I could but hear something pleasant from——." Conscious, however, that there could be nothing pleasant to hear, she again burst into tears; and the young people here returning from their uncle, they all crowded round her with an intention of dissipating her sorrow.

such constant drawbacks on their confined income. John endeavour make up his mind to go to sea; and so completely was he determined to vanquish his inclination, in this particular, that he kept it constantly in his mind, and almost fixed at last, that he should like it. Charlotte calculated that, in a very few years, it would be in her power to undertake the education of very young children. And how freely did she wish that Mrs. Montefort's child was a girl; for, in that case, she might employ a governess for it, and how likely that she might have been preferred to a stranger.

"Well," said Isabel, "she may have time too, by the time I am old enough to go home; and then, perhaps, she may marry me."

"I do not think you would do for Isabel," said John; "for your great deficiency is likely to be music; and Mrs. Montefort says she is sure her child will never be musical, for she has no ear for herself."

Well, I cannot think what I am to be," said Edward, thoughtfully: "I am afraid I shall not be of so much use as the rest;" and his eyes seemed filling with tears.

"Of no use, Edward!" said Fanny Tra-
s, who often found his assistance most
reptable, in teaching her the proper pro-
nciation of the botanical names of plants:
such a nice scholar, at nine years of age,
d to be of no use as you grow up! why, you
y be a language master, or fifty other
ings."

"So I may," said Edward, his coun-
ance brightening, as he threw his arms
und Fanny's neck, "and you shall be my
troness."

"No, no," rejoined Fanny; "you shall
little Lionel's tutor."

"Ah! so I will," said Edward: "and here
mes the dear little fellow," added he, as he
oked out of the window, "and Mrs. Monte-
rt too: how healthy and well he looks;
d how delighted Captain Montefort will
: with him, when he comes home."

The young people now all repaired to lit-

tle Lionel and his nurse, who had already taken off his hat and great coat, and was beginning to show Mrs. Gardiner how nicely Master Montefort looked in Miss Gardiner's robe. Charlotte's countenance evinced the pleasure she felt on hearing this remark; and her delight was still higher, when Mrs. Montefort expressed to her young friend the value she placed on it as a piece of workmanship of hers.

"I thought it was not to have been worn till papa's return," observed Mrs. Gardiner, taking the baby from the nurse, and tenderly embracing it.

"But the little rogue grows so fast, that if I were to wait much longer," replied Mrs. Montefort, "it would be too small for him; these sea-gentlemen are so very uncertain in their movements."

"The ships could hardly have been returned yet, I think," said Mrs. Gardiner: "it is not much more than a twelvemonth."

"It was to be a short voyage, you said Mrs. Montefort; "at least, so given to understand."

Mrs. Gardiner sighed. "I fear I must expect Mr. Gardiner to return with your band."

"Why not?" rejoined Mrs. Montefort: "nothing is to be done by his remaining the Cape, why should he not return to gland? But give that heavy fellow to nurse, and stroll with me down to the mer's. I wish to get some of Mary Langd's hens, for our own poultry is never e."

"Then do have some of ours, dear Mrs. Montefort," said Charlotte Gardiner, who had heard this remark: "we saved a great many more than we have room for, last year; and we were going to have them killed, but I am afraid it would be of no use to keep them for papa."

"Oh, wait a little longer," said Mrs. Montefort: "he may still come to benefit by our good housewifery. By the way, I know not how you manage, for I never can get such fine broods of chickens and ducks *seem always to crowd your coops.*"

"I must do them the justice to say they are very good managers," observed Gardiner: "Charlotte is the superintendant and Isabel and the boys are the active in the business; so they should all reap part of the credit."

Mrs. Montefort and Mrs. Gardiner then proceeding towards the farm, a servant from Fleetwood was seen ascending the hill, to meet them. He appeared to have been running the whole way and was so completely out of breath, when he reached his mistress, that he scarcely articulate, "My master, my wife is returned."

With an exclamation of delight and surprise Mrs. Montefort turned towards the nurse, who was a few paces behind her catching her child in her arms, was immediately setting off towards Fleetwood; before she reached the little wicket, at the entrance of the outer chalk-pit, Captain Montefort himself made his appearance, and the attendant arms received the lovely boy, whose fond mother was longing to see

ernal bosom. The feelings both of Cap-
and Mrs. Montefort are left to be
gined by those best able to understand
1, while we hasten to relieve the ob-
of these tender emotions, from his un-
ng confinement in his father's arms.
r Lionel was old enough to dislike the
ce of strangers, and Mrs. Gardiner be-
very near, he tumultuously signified his
of being removed from his present bon-
e. She received him affectionately from
tain Montefort, and with a countenance
ch evinced all the suspended anxiety of
fe, endeavoured to read if there was any
s of a pleasing nature for herself. Cap-
Montefort immediately understood the
it inquiry; and turning round, directed
. Gardiner's eyes to the spot where he
first appeared, and where Mr. Gar-
r himself was now seen emerging from
ind a bush of hawthorn.

You are a younger man than I am, Monte-
," said Mr. Gardiner, as he approached,
the same smile of good-humour on his
tenance, which was the constant com-

panion of his manly features; "I am
happier, I will venture assert," added
he quickened his pace, on seeing the
diner approach to meet him.

"Thank God, my love, that I have
met again," continued he, as he
his wife.

"Thank God," was re-echoed
Gardiner, and this was all her
heart would allow her to say.

The dear, the cherished name
papa," from all the young people
sounded through the chalk-pit;
tears of Mr. Gardiner fell upon the
of his children, as they all pressed
round him, to share and return his

"Such a moment as this pays
and hours of anxiety," said Mr.
when he could at length speak; "I
us the inside of your little cottage
added he, drawing the hand of his
der his arm.

"We are making rather a scene
good people of the village," observed
tain Montefort, leading his wife

age: "we will go and compose ourselves a little, before we return to Fleetwood; as to that boy," continued he, kissing his grinning baby, which was kicking and crowing in Fanny Travers's arms, "I shall flog him, if he frowns upon his father." He had before noticed Fanny. "Why, this is one of yours, Gardiner," said he, as he proceeded: "Charlotte—no, there is Charlotte. I thought my black-eyed lassie had changed her complexion. I could fancy her to be a Travers."

"It is a Travers," observed Mrs. Montefort, "and one who must become almost as great a favourite of yours as Charlotte Gardiner; for they are very great friends, and resemble each other in many things, though so opposite in complexion. Captain Montefort shook Fanny by the hand; and Mrs. Gardiner having, in the mean time, explained who she was to her husband, sufficiently to obtain his kind reception, Fanny was then introduced to Mr. Gardiner.

"After sitting some little time, to recover her agitation of spirits, into which both

families had been thrown by the arrival of the two gentlemen, Captain Mrs. Montefort, with the nurse and b returned to Fleetwood. The hour of a dinner being arrived, Mr. Gardiner to his seat at the bottom of the table, whi was surrounded by smiles of the most gra fying welcome; and he was scarcely allowe time to take a glass of wine after it, wha the half-dropt hints of the young people be- trayed their anxiety to introduce their father to all the out-of-door comforts of their little residence. Mr. Gardiner, whose easy plac- bility of temper seldom allowed him to ap- pear in a hurry, could not, however, to oblige his children, help hastening his meal; and before the expiration of an hour, there was not a part of the premises to which he had not been introduced. The labours of John and Edward, in the garden, the common vegeta- bles of which were, generally speaking, of heir raising, were exhibited to Mr. Gar- ner by their mother, as proofs of the in- dustry and perseverance of his sons.

What! John begins, and Edward finish

uting the cabbages, I suppose?" said Mr. Gardiner, laughing, and patting John's head.

No; we both finish what we begin, papa," said Edward.

I know what papa means," said John; at——

But you are grown a twelvemonth older wiser, since we met last, I suppose you would add."

I think you will have every reason to be satisfied with his perseverance now," said Mrs. Gardiner, "as well as with the rest of our children: there is nothing like necessity, each us exertion and regularity."

And now for the famous poultry-yard, I have heard so much of," continued Mr. Gardiner. As the children led the way, Mrs. Gardiner informed her husband that it was entirely under the direction of Charlotte, who, if she did not absolutely execute every thing relating to it, was answerable for neatness and cleanliness."

Poor Charlotte! then I must not expect much," said Mr. Gardiner.

"You shall see," replied his wife; they both entered the fenced court, the young people had already arrived.

Charlotte was now called upon to her different arrangements; and the neatness and perfect order of every department quite surprised and delighted her father. He surveyed her with fondness, and cast his eyes over her dress, now observing that none of her vestments were awry, and that the blooming countenance of the beautiful brunette was not disgraced by a disordered curl, nor her well-turned ankle by a slight shoe. Mr. Gardiner pressed the dear girl to his bosom, and silently blessed her for the fluctuation of fortune, which had acted to correct the carelessness of disposition which used to be Charlotte's striking characteristic.

"And Charlotte makes all our papa," said Edward.

"With a little of Isabel's assistance," added John.

"And can she make frocks too?"
Mr. Gardiner; "for I have a little

in my portmanteau, which I think will produce muslin for both of you."

"Oh, yes, I am sure we could make them," said Isabel: "that is, mamma could cut them out, Charlotte could put them together, and I could hem and sew on the frills." Thus arranging it, she flew to the house, and had just gained possession of the packet, as her father and mother arrived in the little parlour.

Mr. Gardiner opened the parcel, and displayed one of the most beautiful and delicate muslins it was possible to obtain, and lace for trimming to correspond. Mrs. Gardiner looked a little disappointed; but she turned towards Isabel, at least expecting that she would be delighted.

The child, however, surveying the muslin for a moment with indifference, then looked up to her father, apparently with an intention of speaking; but checking herself, she merely gave the muslin a fold, and was leaving the table. Mr. Gardiner detained her. "You do not seem pleased with your pre-

sent, my sweet Isabel," said he, clasp-
ing her in his arms: "I thought this would
be to your taste, but you do not seem to
like it. Why, you used to be fond of a smoky
fire."

"But that was when I was a child,"
replied Isabel, "and thought more of
novels than any thing else: I have not
time now. Besides, of what use would that
be, when running about the chambers
through the fields: it would tea-
tify the fact. She then added, in a whisper, "
mamma: it will do for her much better."

Mr. Gardiner kissed the little hands
which were lying across his bosom, then
went towards the door, on its being sharply
knocked. At it appeared Edward, who had
noticed to leave the room; and led him
conducting by the hand James, and
him to approach his father. Jane
returned from the neighbour-
hood whither he had been sent before
her arrival, and he had not yet
lost the happiness of being an eye-witness
of the return.

Mr. Gardiner was not a little

manner with which this faithful servant introduced by his son Edward; and anxious to approve his condescension, where, as so well shown, he instantly rose, and gave his own hand to the attached servant. Mr. James was completely overcome: his feelings were remarkably lively for his situation in life; and when his master thanked him for the care he had taken of his mistress and the children, during his absence, the tears ran down his cheeks, and he could not utter a word of the speech of welcome he had been endeavouring to make.

Mr. Gardiner, knowing that active employment would be the best relief for his feelings, told James that he wished him to hire a cart, to fetch his things from Fleetwood; and desiring the children to amuse themselves in the garden for half an hour, he was not sorry to find himself, at length, alone with his wife.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

MRS. GARDINER had avoided every on the subject on which she was wishing for information, while all the people were near her; but as soon had left the room, she very naturally time in inquiring of her husband of the situation of his affairs.

“Had you asked me the question hours ago, my dear Isabel,” said Mr. C “and before I had spent these three hours with you and our children, in the dwelling of peace and comfort, have answered it with greater ease and with a more certain conviction should convey pleasure in the reply: this moment my wife and my child more to me than every other consideration and I could almost flatter myself, by the *faces of affection* around me, that

them, perhaps, a greater subject of regret than any other I could offer."

3. Gardiner was not backward in giving assurances which were so gratifying to her husband; and it was from her heart she spoke, when she said, that the last month had produced so many subjects of justification, that the presence of her husband alone, had been wanting, to give her everything she wished.

"But you are not to have every thing you desire, my love," replied Mr. Gardiner, with a smile, as he pressed the hand of his wife to his lips. "The same good Providence which restores your husband, returns with him the incumbrances of wealth; and as you are the one, I believe you must be content to take the other."

Mr. Gardiner looked incredulously at his husband, for a moment; but the conviction that he never deceived her, immediately dispelled every doubt, and a crowd of mingled emotions forced themselves to her eyes. *say that this information did not con-*

vey pleasure, would be unnatural, and inconsistent with humanity; but certainly the retrospective satisfaction which had attended the residence in the chalk-pit, and the advantages her children had derived from it, pressed so forcibly on her mind, that the joy she might otherwise have been led to feel, was in a great measure attempered into a much quieter feeling. Joy, however, was certainly felt; and accompanied with that gratitude to the superintending Power above, which, in prosperous circumstances, is one of the most delightful feelings of the heart.

Mr. Gardiner then informed his wife that he had no opportunity of forwarding this intelligence to her before; but that very soon after having written the only letter she had received from him, he had formed hopes that his affairs would take a favourable turn. This they had ultimately done; his reported failure had been a complete piece of roguery; and he was now returned, not only to re-establish his house in all their former *independence* and respectability; but his *presence* abroad had put every thing

completely on the alert there, that but little apprehension offered of any future inconveniences. It was necessary, he added, for him to proceed almost immediately to town, to set at ease the alarmed minds of his partners, but in the mean time he thought it right to inform his children of the alteration that had again taken place in their views in life; for, as he had enjoined nothing like secrecy on his friend Captain Montefort, the news, in all probability, had by this time become known in the village.

The young people received the intelligence with less positive expressions of pleasure than might have been expected. They were so attached to their present place of residence, that the idea of their former spacious mansion no longer bore with it so decided an association of comfort; while the prospect of depending on their own exertions had been so long looked forward to, that it had ceased to be accompanied with any dread of inconvenience. Gradually, however, they became sensible of the superior advantages now held out to them; and the

first gratification occurring to all of them, was the delight of seeing mamma do as she used to do, and all those comforts being restored to mamma, they had seen her cheerfully satisfied without, but which they thought she would be happier with. Charlotte and Isabel were not long in seizing on the delightful anticipation of continuing to live at home, when they were young women, instead of being obliged to reside amongst strangers. Edward again, with delight, looked forward to Oxford and the church; and John reflected how much happier he should be in his father's counting-house than on board ship.

Still there was regret felt at leaving the cottage, where the last year had passed away so pleasantly. To meet this, however, and to indulge the wishes of his children, Mr. Gardiner made a purchase of the spot so much endeared to them all; and intending to make some necessary additions to the dwelling, he determined to keep it as an occasional summer residence. This plan offered something like relief to James, the faithful *servant* of the family, who, between his at-

Attachment to his master, and his affection for Mary Langford, scarcely knew how to decide. The farmer, satisfied in giving his daughter to a steady, respectable husband, had offered the young couple, on their marriage, a residence in his own house, with the prospect of succeeding to the farm; but James could not exactly determine on entirely relinquishing the pleasure of attendance on his master's family. His master, however, in becoming the owner of a place at which it was probable he would reside only a small part of the year, would require a careful person to take care of it in his absence, and this removed every sort of hesitation. James and his intended wife were to reside in the cottage, when unoccupied by the family, and he was promised to be retained as a house-servant, whenever they should come down for a few weeks.

The personal gratification felt by Mrs. Montefort on seeing the favourable termination to the alarm of her friends, was much greater, perhaps, than that felt by Mrs. Gardner herself; and she anticipated, with affection-

ate warmth, the pleasure of seeing her friend restored to a society which she was so well qualified to ornament. Much as she estimated and admired her friend in the bosom of her young family in the chalk-pit, a selfish feeling also prompted her to rejoice in her quitting it; as otherwise they would, in all probability, see very little of each other; for it was not likely that Captain Montefort, in the prime of life, of a cheerful disposition, and in the possession of a very large fortune, should have any intention of passing a great deal of time in the retirement of Fleetwood.

Although under very different circumstances, when Mrs. Gardiner undertook the education of Fanny Travers, she now felt no inclination to shrink from its superintendence with her own daughters; and Mr. Gardiner having entirely approved of her first introduction under his roof, as heartily concurred with his wife that it would be an act of unkindness to the poor girl to make any change at present in her situation. Fanny gratefully acknowledged the kindness of this determination, and Charlotte and Isabel were

~~relieved~~ by hearing that their friend was not ~~to~~ be separated from them.

Mrs. Gardiner did not omit relating to her husband the kind offer Mr. Jackson had ~~made~~ in regard to their boys; and as it ~~appeared~~ her wish, and was thoroughly ~~ap-~~proved by himself, Mr. Gardiner considered ~~that~~ he could not adopt a better plan for their education, than that of committing them to the care of so amiable and exemplary a man as Mr. Jackson appeared to be. The boys were not a little pleased, on first leaving the paternal roof, to feel that they were going where they had every reason to expect happiness; and Mr. Jackson himself was much gratified at the prospect of receiving them.

As we have, in the course of our history, excited the interest of our young readers for George Adams and his gipsy wife, we must ~~not~~ omit informing them, that old Mrs. Adams was ultimately persuaded to come and reside with her children; and that George ~~con-~~tinued to be assiduous and industrious, in the ~~inferior~~ rank of life in which his early errors ~~had placed him~~. His wife, by the exertion

of Mrs. Montefort, and the attentive mother-in-law, was somewhat relieved by her extreme ignorance, and the promise to be well-disposed.

By the interest of Mrs. Montefort, Mr. Harding was received back into London, and the fear of again losing it, for keeping her neat and regular, she acquired the habit of being so.

On the morning upon which it settled that Mrs. Gardiner and her family should return to their London, Mrs. Gardiner called her round her, and thus addressed her

“You are now, my dear children, at the point of returning to a house where you will see every thing about you in the same elegance to which, from your birth, you are accustomed to see it. Re-established in his former paternal opulence, it is necessary that he should appear in corresponding circumstances to those in which he feels himself. I entreat you, when returned

sphere in which, in a worldly sense, you will have nothing to wish for, never to forget the twelvemonth you have passed here, and the practice of self-denial it has been necessary for you all to acquire. There is not one of you to whom the change has not been of service. Many errors you have been excited to correct; and, on the whole, I feel much more satisfied with my children now, than I did when I first introduced them here. But you must still persevere—still constantly bear in remembrance, that the wealth of commerce is frequently transitory, and that another year may, in reality, produce what was threatened through the last. The temptations of prosperity are greater, perhaps, than those of adversity, but they are not irresistible; and remember that your father's and my happiness depend more on you, than on the uncertain tenure of worldly riches and success."

Mrs. Gardiner's voice here faltered, and the young people hastening to embrace her, assured her of their never-failing exertions to preserve her affection and good opinion.

The voice of uncle Harley, who had spent the last few days at the cottage, now announced the arrival of wheels; and the old gentleman's eyes sparkled with pleasure as he saw the well-known livery on the box of the barouche, which now rolled down to the door of the cottage.

Mr. Gardiner had preceded his family to town, and as he could not return at present, they now followed him thither, that the projected alterations might be made for their reception at a future period. James, as he shut the carriage-door, almost regretted that he was not going to spring up behind, instead of the young man who had been hired to take that place. He stood with the family into which he was now received as a son, to catch the last glimpse as it passed the gate at the bottom of the chalk-pit, and entered the field adjoining the grounds at Fleetwood. Little Lionel and his nurse were walking here; and the little fellow was taken for a moment into the carriage, to receive the caresses of the group within. His father and mother, at a distance, waved their handker-

chiefs, in token of farewell; and in a few days, they hoped to meet again in London, and no painful reflection was connected with the idea. Village groups every now and then appeared at the doors of their cottages, to drop their curtsies to the ladies, who had been kind friends to many of them; and at length the carriage, taking a sharp turn from the cross to the high road, our young party lost, for the present, even the clump of trees which marked out to them the spot where stood, embosomed in their shade, the happy *Cottage in the Chalk-pit.*

THE END.



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